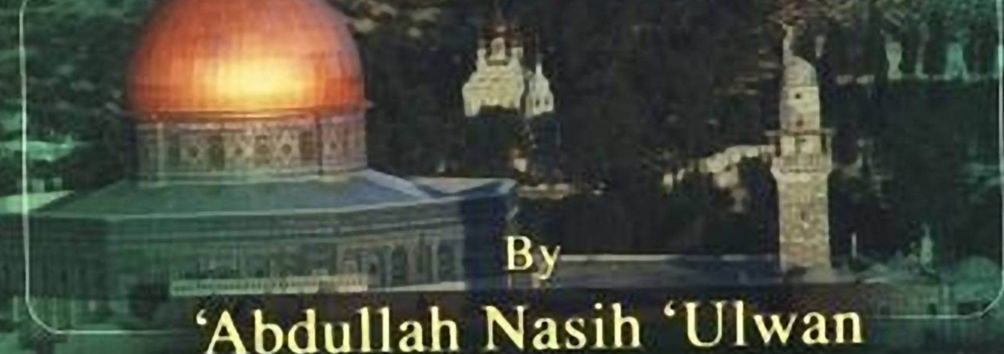
Salah Ad-Din Al-Ayyubi

(Saladin)

Hero of the Battle of Hattin and Liberator of Jerusalem from Crusaders

532 - 589 A.H./1137 - 1193 C.E.



By

'Abdullah Nasih 'Ulwan

Translated By

Khalifa Ezzat Abu Zeid

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For Printing, Publishing, Distribution and Translation

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Foreword

By

Sheikh Sa‘id Hawwa

All praise be to Allah, and peace and blessings of Allah be upon the Messenger of Allah and his household.

The author did well in choosing to write about Salah Ad-Din's life for the following reasons:

1. The Muslim *ummah* (nation) urgently needs a person like the hero Salah Ad-Din in order to regain his epoch. Therefore, Muslims should search for one whose characteristics match those of Salah Ad-Din.

2. Jerusalem is undergoing a severe trial nowadays, so Muslims should read the history of their forefathers to realize how Jerusalem was liberated in order to liberate it again.

3. Our Muslim *ummah* has strayed from the straight path and deviated from the way of the exemplars. Thus, the *ummah* should search for those who set a good example and realize that Salah Ad-Din was one of those who had an ideal character over the passage of time.

4. Our *ummah* has ignored the way of jihad, which is the

only way to liberate Palestine. Rather, it has indulged in lusts and sophism. So, it should be reminded with an extensive biography, and there is none better than that of Salah Ad-Din in this respect.

The author has done well in choosing to remember this ideal character. We hope also that the Muslim *ummah* will do well in seizing the means of obtaining victory.

He also did well when he brought Salah Ad-Din's biography to light because he had a great, singular character. Islam was the source of this ingenuity and the reason people loved him. Moreover, their trust in his character and the *ummah's* faith were other reasons for Jerusalem's liberation. This issue needs to be emphasized so that Muslim leaders find the true manner of leadership in current times.

The only way to lead the Muslim *ummah* today is to adopt the issue of Palestine sincerely and in a manner harmonious with the hopes, beliefs, culture and history of the Muslims. The Muslim *ummah* has preserved the best memory of Salah Ad-Din because he performed like that.

As for those who think that the way of leadership is

the false adoption and lying promises, they are wrong. If they follow this devious way, generations will curse them and history will prosecute them.

As for those who think that the Palestinian issue will be solved by another belief that is separate from the heritage of the Muslim *ummah,* they are wrong and will meet the wrath of Allah, the curse of generations, and the prosecution of history.

The Palestinian issue has been the pivot of events in the region throughout the ages. It has also been the pivot of glory and heroism. The unification of Greater Syria (what is now Palestine, Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria) and Egypt under the banner of Islam was the starting point of the destruction of the Crusader invasion. This unity needed the support of the Muslim world represented in the 'Abbasid Caliphate.

The Palestinian issue today also needs unity like that which was between Egypt and Greater Syria, a unity based on religious content and Islamic teachings. Unity needs all the potentialities of the whole Muslim world.

This book is the practical lesson and the real way to carry this out. Hence, we should read it, distribute it,

and give it as a present. We ask Allah to bless the author for it.

Sheikh Sa'id Hawwa

In the Name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Ever-Merciful

Preface to the Second and Third Editions

All praise be to Allah, by Whose grace good deeds are completed. Peace and blessing of Allah be upon the master of fighters and champions, Muhammad, and upon his guided Companions and those who follow them until the world ends.

Unfortunately, some Muslims are afflicted by despair and despondency because they think that there is no solution to reform and regain the glory of the Islamic *ummah* (nation) nowadays. Other Muslims call for seclusion and sitting at home because they think that the end of the world is imminent. They also think that the time has come for man to go out with his goats to mountains and rainy places in order to keep away from the trials and temptations until he dies.[1]

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(1) Al-Bukhari recorded that the Prophet ﷺ said, "A time will come when the best property of a Muslim will be sheep that he will take to the top of mountains and the places of rainfall (valleys) so as to flee with his religion from trials and afflictions." However, the Prophet ﷺ here refers to those who are forced to apostasy. As long as there are Muslims who perform the rituals and carry out the rules of Islam and have the chance to cooperate , isolation and seclusion are unlawful.

Moreover, some scholars allege that there is no way to reform this *ummah* unless Allah sends *Al-Mahdi Al-Muntazhar* [1] or Jesus to fill the world with justice and faith instead of injustice and disbelief. When the despairing people adopt such ideas, they are going to be destroyed before other Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever says Muslims are destroyed will be destroyed before them."

Who could have believed that the Muslims would regain their honor after the Crusaders had occupied most of the Islamic countries and Al-Aqsa Mosque for one hundred years?

Who could have believed that the bold champion Salah Ad-Din would liberate these countries and regain power, honor and glory in the Battle of Hattin?

Who could have believed that the Muslims would regain their power and honor after the collapse, rape, and killing of the Islamic world from one end to the other at the hands of the Tartars? (It was said that their leader Hulaku made mountains from Muslims' skulls) .

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(1) *Al-Mahdi Al-Muntazhar* is "The Directed One", a ruler who will appear upon the earth in the last days and guide people to the right path. (translator) .

Who could have believed that the bold Qutuz would liberate the Muslim world and regain their glory in the decisive Battle of ‘Ain Jallut?

Optimism plays a great role in the victory of nations, and a spirit of strength motivates men to achieve more victories.

I advise youths to read the biography of Salah Ad-Din (may Allah have mercy on him) and study the reasons for his victories. I am sure that if our leaders and youths follow Salah Ad-Din’s approach and his way to victory, they will liberate Jerusalem, regain Palestine, and raise the banner of Islam again. Almighty Allah says:

﴿وَنُرِيدُ أَن نَّمُنَّ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتُضْعِفُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ ٱلْوَٰرِثِينَ﴾ .

﴿***And We wished to do a favour to those who were weak (and oppressed) in the land, and to make them rulers and to make them the inheritors***﴾ (Al-Qasas 28:5)

O youths, in the future Muslims certainly will be victorious and restore the glory to Islam. This is based on the words of the Prophet ﷺ: "The rule at the beginning of your religion (Islam) will be prophetic and merciful and remain for a fixed time until Allah erases

it. Then an unjust authority (power) will come and remain for a period of time, and then Allah will erase it. Then a dictatorial authority will come and remain for a certain time, and then Allah will erase it. Then a caliphate will come and follow the way of the Prophetic traditions and people will follow them. Then the teachings of Islam will be revealed to the land and will satisfy the people of the earth and the people of Paradise. Then the sky will rain continually and the land will produce all kinds of plants."

It seems that the unjust authority mentioned above has ended with the Ottoman authority. Now we are living in the dictatorial authority in which most leaders reached power by force. These dictatorships started with Ataturk in Turkey and spread everywhere. However, the indications of an Islamic awakening give promise that this will never last. The caliphate will follow the approach of the Prophet ﷺ . I hope that will soon be realized, Allah willing.

I am sure and optimistic that the hands of youths, the strength of men, the perseverance of those who call to Islam, and the generosity of the rich will achieve this. And for Allah that is not difficult or hard.[1]

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(1) See my book *Hata Ya'lam Ash-Shabab*, pp. 87-88.

Finally, I would like to thank all the brothers who praised the book. I thank also the great poet 'Abdul Jabbār Ar-Rahbi for his honest praise, good poetry, and deep trust. I will record his praise and poetry for readers in the last pages. I pray Allah to make our good actions sincere to Him and guide us always to write about the lives of our bold forefathers and champions so that the coming generations may follow their way. Allah is the Only One Who answers our prayers.

Preface to the First Edition

Praise be to Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon the Messenger of Allah, the master of brave men and champions, and upon his companions and those who follow them until the world ends.

Talking about the lives of our great figures in history, leaders in jihad, and men in the field of reformation is the best talk and the most beloved remembrance because they were the guiding lights for people. Salah Ad-Din was one of those who guided people to the right path, raised the banner of unity in the Muslim world, liberated it from Crusaders and colonists, and recorded in history his victories over them.

One may ask why the author preferred Salah Ad-Din's biography over those of other figures such as Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, Khalid ibn Al-Walid, and Abu Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah. The answer is that Salah Ad-Din's life is connected with the manifest victory and liberation of Jerusalem from the claws of the Crusaders and the detested colonists. When I show the present generation the secret of and reasons for victory at the Battle of Hattin, I draw the Muslim's attention to the right path in liberating Jerusalem from criminal Jews,

unjust Zionism, and those who support them in the East and West. Remember that Jerusalem is the first of the two *qiblahs*, the third mosque in rank after the two holy mosques in Makkah and Al-Madinah, and the mosque from which the Prophet ﷺ ascended to the seven heavens.

Readers will find in these chapters how such victory was achieved by a Kurdish man, not an Arab; how he unified the Muslim *ummah* under his guiding leadership; how he convinced the people to follow the Islamic Shari'ah; how he fought in the name of Islam and to make Allah's word supreme; how he triumphed by faith and by adhering to Allah's rope; and how he treated the enemies with good manners and noble morals.

Readers will also find the noblest qualities by which he was distinguished and the most important reforms he achieved. In brief, they will find who Salah Ad-Din was.

The Islamic *ummah* needs to benefit from his life story, for it may be a way to regain honor and glory and triumph over our enemies. Muslims also need to benefit from knowing the reasons and factors that paved the way to victory in the Battle of Hattin and the regaining of Palestine.

May Allah aid us with His victory. And for Allah that is not difficult.

I pray Allah to inspire Muslim rulers everywhere to follow Salah Ad-Din's approach that is represented in sacrifice and jihad, faith and piety. I ask Him to inspire them to erect an edifice of unity and glory as he did.

And only Allah can answer our prayers.

The author

'Abdullah Nasih 'Ulwan

- 1 -

Salah Ad-Din's Family and Upbringing

lineage

Salah Ad-Din was of a noble, highborn Kurdish family that ruled Egypt and Greater Syria (what is now Syria, Lebanon and Palestine). It was called the Ayyubid State. The family ancestry is traced back to the noblest Kurdish tribe, Ar-Rawadia[1] from Hazian, which was one of the largest Kurdish tribes. Some historians stated that Salah Ad-Din's genealogy was traced back to Mudar of 'Adnan. Undoubtedly, they wanted to trace the lineage of every great character to the Arabs. This surely disagrees with the methodology of research and with fact. They thought that virtues and morals are confined only to Arabs, as if non-Arabs could not establish culture or glory.

If we read history and search for our great figures, we will find that most of those who played a great role in establishing culture and civilization were non-Arab. But by falsely tracing all great characters to the Arabs, such historians encouraged unjust fanaticism and

(1)This tribe lived in a village called Dewin in Azerbaijan, in which Ayyub ibn Shadhi, Salah Ad-Din's father, was born.

discrimination, which are not allowed by the principles of Islam. The Qur'an declares:

﴿ إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ ﴾

﴿*The believers are nothing else than brothers*﴾. (Al-Hujarat 49:10)

﴿ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ﴾.

﴿*Verily, the most honorable of you in the Sight of Allah is that (believer) who has At-Taqwa [is pious and righteous*﴾. (Al-Hujarat 49:13)

Then what message, after that, will they believe in?

Salah Ad-Din was the son of the Kurd Najm Ad-Din Ayyub ibn Shadhi ibn Marwan. We will touch on the early life of his family and its important deeds.

Birth

Sultan Yusuf Salah Ad-Din was born in 532 A.H. (1137 C.E.) in the castle of an ancient village called Tikrit near Baghdad. The Persian kings had built the castle on the Tigris River a long time before to store ammunition and serve as a surveillance post. The Muslims conquered Tikrit in 16 A.H. during the caliphate of 'Umar ibn Al-Khattab.(1)

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(1) *Mu'jam Al-Buldan*, vol. 2, p. 491.

It remained under the control of different Muslim leaders. When the Seljuq Turks came to power, Najm Ad-Din Ayyub ibn Shadhi, Salah Ad-Din's father, contacted a major figure in the Seljuq police in Baghdad named Mujahid Ad-Din Bahruz. He appointed Ayyub as a commander over Tikrit castle, with his brother Shirkuh Asad Ad-Din as an assistant. The two brothers thus moved from the village of Dewin in Azerbaijan into Iraq. They were from the Rawadian Kurds and came to Tikrit in order to work in Bahruz's police.

Strangely, Salah Ad-Din was born on the very day on which Mujahid Ad-Din Bahruz exiled Najm Ad-Din Ayyub and his brother Shirkuh because the latter had killed one of the castle guards, who had slanderously accused a woman of being unchaste. Shirkuh killed him when the woman asked for his help. At the beginning, Mujahid was confused whether to expel or leave them. Then he decided to expel them, fearing the guard's family would take revenge. He expressed fear for them and advised them to depart at night. They took their families and the newborn Yusuf Salah Ad-Din and departed to Mosul.

Ibn Khalikan stated in his book *Wafayat Al-A'yan*

that Ayyub became so pessimistic for the newborn, believing that calamity was portended by his crying at their departure, that he wanted to kill him. Someone warned him, "Sir, do not be pessimistic for the newborn, as he knows nothing. This is divine destiny. How can you know but that he might become a famous king and a great character in the future? So, take care of him, as he does not realize your pessimism." These words had an influence on Ayyub, and he soon returned to his senses and to the path of Islam.

Upbringing

Ayyub and Shirkuh left Baghdad to Mosul and stayed with 'Imad Ad-Din Zanki, the ruler of Mosul. He welcomed them and gave them gifts because they had saved him from being killed or taken as a prisoner of war when he was fighting against the Seljuqs when Bahruz was the governor of Baghdad. We mentioned previously that Ayyub and his brother were appointed as commanders over Tikrit and its castle. When 'Imad Ad-Din Zanki was defeated by the Seljuq ruler, he withdrew with his troops and passed through Tikrit. Najm Ad-Din Ayyub detained him for a while. Najm Ad-Din had two choices, to kill or imprison him. However, he preferred to release him and help him to

get to Mosul. 'Imad Ad-Din did not forget the favor.

When the two brothers arrived in Mosul, as we have mentioned above, he generously gave them land on which to live.

The family lived well under the patronage of 'Imad Ad-Din. Moreover, he appointed the two brothers as commanders over the army. When 'Imad Ad-Din occupied Ba'albak in 534 A.H., he appointed Najm Ad-Din Ayyub as a governor over it. This appointment indicated 'Imad Ad-Din's confidence and trust in Najm Ad-Din and his dependence on him.

Salah Ad-Din spent part of his childhood in Ba'albak, where he lived the best days of his life. He learned horsemanship, trained for war and jihad, and practiced politics and management. The poet declares:

> Boys are brought up according to the ways
>
> of education the father used to follow.

After 'Imad Ad-Din's son, Nur Ad-Din, occupied Damascus [in 1154 C.E.], Salah Ad-Din spent some of his best days in Damascus where his bravery and strength were perfected. He had a high status and the respect of the son of Damascus' ruler. He became well known for his calm, polite and pious character. He also

burned with zeal for Islam and Muslims.

In Nur Ad-Din's time he was appointed as the head of the police in Damascus. He succeeded in the new office, cleaning up Damascus of criminals and robbers and regaining stability and security. The people lived in safety and calm under his administration. Hassan ibn Numair, nicknamed 'Arqalah, rejoiced in Yusuf Salah Ad-Din's office and success, as he said in a poem:

> O robbers of Syria, take your time,
> then I will advise with my words.
> Yusuf has come to you, whose name is
> like the Prophet Yusuf, insightful and
> handsome.
> That one cut women's hands and this one
> cuts off robbers' hands.

The period he spent in Egypt was the most important in forming his heroic and military experience. Shawir As-Sa'di revolted against the Cairo-based Fatimid Caliph Al-'Adid in 558 A.H. and sent to Damascus to ask the aid of Nur Ad-Din Mahmud. He accepted to help him. He provided him with troops led by Asad Ad-Din Shirkuh, who took his nephew Salah Ad-Din with him. Salah Ad-Din displayed great skills and military

genius in the arts of war and fighting. As a result, they triumphed over the enemy and joined Egypt to Nur Ad-Din Mahmud's kingdom in 564 A.H. This will be explained in details in the next chapter.

To sum up, in his early life and in the second and third decades of his youth, Salah Ad-Din was brought up on good virtues and noble qualities. He acquired the military skills, deep-rooted customs, Islamic zeal, and literary and financial boldness by means of his companionship with kings and princes. This formed his unique, excellent character that changed the course of history.

Education

We mentioned above that Salah Ad-Din spent his early years in Ba'albak. Naturally, his place of education changed from one city to another. He learned how to read and write, memorized the Qur'an and the rules of Arabic language as children of Muslim noblemen used to learn.

The author of *Tabakat Ash-Shaf'iyah* stated that Salah Ad-Din learned Hadith from Al-Hafizh As-Salafi, Ibn 'Auf, An-Naisaburi and 'Abdullah ibn Barri. He was a jurist, a reciter of Qur'an, and an enthusiastic poet.

Historians agree that most scholars came from east and west, from Samarkand and Cordova, to Damascus in order to teach and learn in mosques and schools. Certainly, Salah Ad-Din learned from most of them, especially 'Abdullah ibn Abi 'Asrun, who lectured in Al- Umawi Mosque. He was brought to Damascus by Nur Ad-Din, who built schools in Damascus and the major cities of Syria[1] to teach people and spread knowledge. Abi 'Asrun occupied such a high position that he became the head of judges in Damascus. Salah Ad-Din respected this scholar and took care of him, especially when he lost his eyesight.

Salah Ad-Din was very skillful in riding, javelin throwing, hunting and military arts because the environment in which he lived excelled in these fields. As a result, he acquired experience and could lead soldiers and wisely solve dilemmas in wars. Besides, he had the basic characteristics to be a great fighter: talent, intelligence, heredity, environment, training and education. It is rare to find such characteristics in one person.

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(1)Throughout the book, Syria and Greater Syria refer to the area now covered by Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, and Syria. It was at that time known as Ash-Sham, but Ash-Sham today refers only to Damascus. (editor)

Other characteristics that made him a great figure were his steadfast heart and balanced intellect when others had lost heart and reason. For example, during the conquest of Syria, he was told that his brother Taj Al-Muluk was killed; then he learned of the death of his brother Al-Malik Al-Muzhzhafar after the defeat of Acre. The latter was one of the best engineers in fortifying, safeguarding and organizing castles. However, the bad news did not affect him in battles.

In sum, from the previous glance at Salah Ad-Din's early life, we realize that he was a skilled politician, an experienced leader, a trained fighter and an exalted scholar. It was as if destiny wanted him to be a champion in the Battle of Hattin, to strike terror in the hearts of the Crusaders, to become well known in the East and West, to set a good example for future generations, and to be recorded among the great figures of history. How impossible for mothers to give birth to another like Salah Ad-Din with his zeal and bravery, the defense of the stronghold of Islam and the land of the prophets. The poet said:

> Those were my good fathers, then bring me with fathers like them
>
> When we, O Jarir, are gathered again in the Meeting.

- 2 -

The Beginning of Salah Ad-Din's Rule

Egypt during the Fatimid Rule

Shortly before the appearance of Salah Ad-Din, Egypt was ravaged by local rebellions and internal struggles among the various parties of the Mamelukes, Turkish, Sudanese and Moroccan.[1] Starvation and epidemics prevailed and weakened the strength of the people. Assassinations were plotted against viziers and caliphs in various ways.

The Fatimid caliph had lost the ability to control the country. Power was in the hands of whichever vizier or general triumphed. Many massacres and battles broke out because of the disputes over the vizierate in the Fatimid caliphate. Stability was achieved when Tala'i' ibn Ruzzik gained the vizierate in 549 A.H.. Chaos broke out again after he was assassinated and his son, Ruzzik ibn Tala'i' took over in 558 A.H. (1163 C.E.).

Both Nur Ad-Din and the Frankish Crusader King

---

(1) The Mamelukes were white slaves who were captives of war or purchased in the slave markets of Asia Minor, Persia, central Asia, and elsewhere. They were primarily trained as soldiers and did not mix with the common people but kept their own characteristics. (editor)

Almaric of Jerusalem (known in Arabic as Al-Amuri) paid particular attention to Egypt. Each did his best to occupy it in order to strengthen his own power and kingdom, but they were afraid of each other. The internal dispute over the vizierate in Egypt was a reason for the intervention of both Nur Ad-Din and Almaric in Egyptian policy.

Shawir As-Sa'di's Rebellion

When Ruzzik ibn Tala'i' was the vizier in the Fatimid caliphate, Shawir ibn Mujair As-Sa'di, who was the governor over Upper Egypt, rebelled against him. He was able to defeat and kill Ruzzik and replaced him as the vizier for the Fatimid Caliph Al-'Adid in the month of Muharram 558 A.H. (1163 C.E.).

When Shawir As-Sa'di and his sons became corrupt, Durgham ibn 'Amir Al-Lakhami, one of the generals, arranged with the Fatimid caliph to dismiss him. The caliph rebelled against Shawir, forcing him to flee. Durgham replaced Shawir As-Sa'di, who then turned to Damascus seeking the help of Nur Ad-Din Mahmud. He pledged to pay the expenses of the campaign over Egypt and an annual tribute of one third of the Egyptian income. Nur Ad-Din hesitated at first to help

him. News came that King Almaric of Jerusalem had attacked Egypt and overcome Durgham, who then allied with Almaric and paid tribute to him, fearing that Shawir would ally with Nur Ad-Din against him. At that, Nur Ad-Din was compelled to cooperate with Shawir against Durgham. He sent with him Asad Ad-Din Shirkuh, who took his nephew Salah Ad-Din with him. Asad Ad-Din overcame Durgham, and Shawir became the vizier again.

However, Shawir did not carry out his promises to Nur Ad-Din. Rather, he allied in secret with the King of Jerusalem. Asad Ad-Din and Salah Ad-Din were then compelled to fight against Shawir, who sought the King of Jerusalem's help. The Syrian army held out against the Egyptian and Crusader army in Bulbais from Ramadan until Dhul-Hijjah, 559 A.H. (1164 C.E.). Nur Ad-Din seized the opportunity when the King of Jerusalem was busy with Egypt and conquered Haram and Panias strongholds. Consequently, Jerusalem's King Almaric feared for his kingdom and was compelled to settle a truce with Asad Ad-Din Shirkuh on the condition that the two sides withdraw from Egypt. Thus ended the first stage of the struggle between Nur Ad-Din and the Crusaders (also known

as the Franks) over Egypt.

Second Stage of the Struggle over Egypt

Asad Ad-Din Shirkuh profited from going to Egypt. He explored and studied it thoroughly and made sure that Egypt was the land through which he could overcome the Crusaders. Therefore, he facilitated the matter for Nur Ad-Din and asked his permission to occupy it. Nur Ad-Din responded to his request and provided him with a second expedition led by Shirkuh and Salah Ad-Din in 562 A.H. When the vizier, Shawir, heard that the Syrian army was headed to Egypt, he sought the help of his Crusader allies, who agreed to help him. The two armies confronted each other in Munia in Upper Egypt. The Syrian army was victorious over its enemies in 563 A.H. This battle proved Salah Ad-Din's bravery and strength.

The Syrian army then headed north and conquered Alexandria without resistance. Asad Ad-Din appointed his nephew Salah Ad-Din as ruler over Alexandria. It was the first time for Salah Ad-Din to become a ruler, as if destiny had given him the opportunity to demonstrate his talents, skills, heroism and genius. As soon as Asad Ad-Din had gone to Al-Fustat and Cairo,

the Crusaders, with the aid of Byzantine troops, attacked Alexandria and blockaded it by sea and land. The besieged people in Alexandria were close to surrendering, but Salah Ad-Din was able to resist the enemy until his uncle joined him. The result of this stage was that the two sides signed a truce by which they withdrew from Egypt.

Last Stage of the Struggle over Egypt

Jerusalem's King Almaric broke the truce by not withdrawing all his troops from Egypt, intending to occupy it after the Syrian troops had withdrawn. He prepared an expedition, occupied the city of Bulbais, killed many people, and then headed to Al-Fustat to occupy it. When vizier Shawir was told that Crusaders intended to occupy Al-Fustat, he set it on fire for fifty-four days. The Crusaders then headed to Cairo and blockaded it. Shawir negotiated with the Crusaders until the Syrian troops he had recalled arrived.

Nur Ad-Din seized the opportunity again to occupy Egypt. Therefore, he sent, for the third time, another expedition led by Shirkuh and Salah Ad-Din. When they reached Egypt and joined with the Egyptian troops, the Crusaders withdrew without fighting.

When Shirkuh entered Cairo, the people welcomed him and saw a good omen in him. The Fatimid Caliph Al-'Adid brought him near to him and was generous to him. There was a conspiracy against Shawir As-Sa'di, and he was assassinated in 564 A.H.. Asad Ad-Din Shirkuh replaced him as the vizier for the Fatimid caliph, but he lasted for only two months, dying in 564 A.H. (1169 C.E.).

Analysis and Commentary

From the foregoing situations with his uncle and the battles, we conclude that Salah Ad-Din had a rare character combining bravery, wisdom through trials and politics, and experience in the arts of war. It was as if destiny had chosen him from his early years to be a unique character and a great champion in history. Undoubtedly, the battles in which he participated increased his experience, confidence and faith, and manifested his rare heroism that dominated in history. In the next chapter, we will explain how he was able to unify the Muslim countries politically and form one Islamic front. This was one of the main factors in the triumph over the Crusaders in the Battle of Hattin. That victory, which history is still mentioning, will be an example for succeeding generations .

- 3 -

Salah Ad-Din in Egypt

Vizier for the Fatimid Caliph

When Asad Ad-Din Shirkuh died after ruling for two months, Salah Ad-Din held three days of mourning. The Fatimid Caliph Al-'Adid then chose Yusuf Salah Ad-Din to be the vizier despite his young age and despite the presence of senior generals and great figures in Egypt at that time. Historians stated that the reasons for this selection were that the Fatimid Caliph hoped to have mastery over him and that he would be an obedient pawn at his beck and call because he was young. But destiny determined something else, as we will explain later.

Salah Ad-Din was thirty-two when he was appointed as vizier, and he had acquired great experience in warfare with Nur Ad-Din and his uncle Shirkuh, who were the major reasons for his superiority.

Salah Ad-Din attempted to satisfy the Egyptian people, showered them with much money, and treated them kindly lest they might cooperate with the Egyptian princes against him. As a result, they loved

him and became closer to him.

Moreover, victories over the Franks and the liberation of Damieta, Gaza and 'Aqabah from them contributed much to his fame. He liberated these cities and 'Aqabah harbor, which was the gateway to the Red Sea through which the Egyptians went to Makkah for Hajj. This great victory and the protection of the pilgrimage route were major factors in the love and confidence between him and the Egyptians. Consequently, the Egyptians left the Shi'ah (Shi'ite) sect and joined the Sunni one with Salah Ad-Din in order to fight against Allah's enemies and theirs.

Ending Internal Conspiracies

We mentioned previously that Salah Ad-Din took office at a young age. Therefore, the men who worked under the patronage of the Fatimid State envied him, regarding him as a foreigner and usurper of their rights. Furthermore, they attempted to strengthen the Fatimids' power in Egypt at any cost. They conspired and plotted against him in order to get rid of the ambitious young vizier.

The most outstanding plots were those of Najah, the caliph's confidant; 'Imarah Al-Yamani; and Kanz Ad-

Dawlah.

The Plot of Najah

In 564 A.H., Najah, who was an influential eunuch in the palace of Al-'Adid, the last Fatamid Caliph, cooperated with a group of Egyptians to ally with the Franks against Salah Ad-Din.

The eunuch sent a message to the Crusaders asking them to advance on Egypt. He planned that when they arrived and Salah Ad-Din fought them, he would attack him from behind, thus putting Salah Ad-Din between the two armies. After he wrote the message, he put it inside a new shoe and gave it to a man to carry to the Franks. But the shoe fell into the hands of one of Salah Ad-Din's followers, who quickly took it to him. Salah Ad-Din knew the truth but concealed it from his followers and delayed Najah's punishment lest the latter's followers and supporters should rise against him. He bided his time and lay in wait for him.

Once, when Najah went out to his own palace outside Cairo, Salah Ad-Din sent a group of soldiers to kill him. Consequently, the caliph's army of Sudanese soldiers, nearly 50,000, pledged to take revenge on Salah Ad-Din. The battle between the caliph's

Sudanese soldiers and Salah Ad-Din's army lasted for two days. Salah Ad-Din defeated them and thus got rid of Najah and the Sudanese soldiers who rebelled against him.

Not only the Sudanese conspired against him, but also the Fatimid princes kindled the fire of war and discord in the state.

The Plot of 'Imarah Al-Yamani

Among the great conspiracies against Salah Ad-Din was the one arranged by the well-known chronicler 'Imarah Al-Yamani. He gathered a large number of supporters in Cairo in order to appoint one of Al-'Adid's sons, hoping to regain the Fatimid rule and expel Salah Ad-Din, and hurriedly sent a message to the Franks in order to cooperate with them to smash his rule. Many malicious and hateful men joined with 'Imarah to get rid of him.

One of those conspirators, called Zain Ad-Din ibn Naja, betrayed them to Salah Ad-Din, seeking a reward from him. Salah Ad-Din arrested them all and killed them to make them an example to everyone who plotted evil for the country. The conspiracy was in 569 A.H.

The Plot of Kanz Ad-Dawlah

Another conspiracy took place in Aswan and Qus in 570 A.H. Al-Maqrizi wrote about this plot in his book As-*Suluk li-Ma'rifat Dewal Al-Muluk*:

In 570 A.H., Kanz Ad-Dawlah, the ruler of Aswan, gathered the Arabs and Sudanese. They proceeded straightaway to Cairo intending to regain the Fatimid rule. He spent much money to achieve this purpose. Another group joined him and killed ten princes of Salah Ad-Din's followers. A man called Qiyas ibn Shadi from the village of Tud attacked Qus and plundered its wealth. Salah Ad-Din prepared a large army led by his brother Al-Malik Al-'Adil to fight him. Al-Malik Al-'Adil killed Qiyas ibn Shadi and dispersed his soldiers. Then he went to Tud to fight against Kanz Ad-Dawlah, who fled after a battle that killed most of his soldiers. Then he was killed on 7 Safar. Al-Malik Al-'Adil went to Cairo on 18 Safar.

Thus, Salah Ad-Din eradicated the conspiracies and got rid of the unjust, the aggressors, plotters and schemers. This indicates his intelligence and interest in his subjects' affairs.

Mutanabi's words apply to his characteristics:

Hardships always come to those who have the
ability to endure them
Just as the good qualities are to be found
in the honored people.
A minor thing may seem great in the eyes
of a minor person
Just as a great thing seems minor in the
eyes of a great person.

Eradicating External Plots

After Salah Ad-Din had taken the vizierate in Egypt, the Franks began to observe his activities carefully and followed his news eagerly. They were very fearful of him lest the people join their hearts with him and liberate the Holy Land. They prepared and lay in wait to eliminate him.

The first attempt was the attack on Damietta. When Salah Ad-Din had firmly established his rule, the Franks in the Levant felt endangered. Therefore, they sent messages to Spain and Sicily in order to provoke upheaval and remind them of fear for Jerusalem. Furthermore, they sent a group of priests and monks to incite people to rebel and provided them with money,

men and weapons.

Their soldiers soon blockaded Damietta in 564 A.H. Salah Ad-Din sent to Damietta, via the Nile, an army equipped with ammunition and weapons. He asked Nur Ad-Din's assistance to drive away the Franks. Nur Ad-Din responded by sending a number of expeditions to Egypt and by going himself with his own soldiers to the Crusader principalities in the Levant and Palestine. When the Franks found expeditions coming to Egypt and Nur Ad-Din entering their countries, they withdrew disappointed. They had stayed fifty days in Damietta.

Five years later, in 569 A.H., Franks from Sicily attacked Alexandria. Their fleet reached the coast carrying fifteen hundred horses and thirty thousand fighters, cavalry and infantry, equipped with weapons, provisions, mangonels, siege engines and boats. When they reached the shore, they killed seven Muslim soldiers, sank some of the Muslim ships, and pitched three hundred tents. Then they proceeded to Alexandria.

Salah Ad-Din was in the city of Faqus at that time. When he learned on the third day that Alexandria had been surrounded, he prepared a great army equipped

with weapons and ammunitions. The encounter lasted until late afternoon on the fourth day. Salah Ad-Din was able to defeat them, sink their ships, kill many of them, and take their baggage and weapons as spoils. Thus the hero smashed their blockade and broke up their troops. The remaining soldiers went back to their country disappointed.

To sum up, Salah Ad-Din twice rescued Egypt from the aggression of the Franks and destroyed their plots. This indicates that Salah Ad-Din was like a sword on the Crusaders' necks and like a lion that protects and defends Islam and Muslims.

Sermon in the Name of the Abbasid Caliph

After Salah Ad-Din had eliminated internal and external plots and had become firmly established, he wanted to take other steps on the road to independence.

Seeing that the Egyptians exaggerated in following the Prophet's family, i.e. they followed the Shi'ah sect, he began to call them to the Sunni sect, which most of the people in the Muslim world follow. Therefore, he established two great schools, the Nasariyah School and the Kamiliya School, so that people might follow the right sect. The desired change was easy, for Nur Ad-

Din urged him to have the Friday sermon delivered in the name of the Abbasid Caliph rather than the Fatimid Caliph (thus effectively deposing the Fatimid Caliph). It was not only Nur Ad-Din who urged the change, but the whole Islamic world agreed to it. Al-'Imad, the khatib (the one who delivers the sermon) for Salah Ad-Din, addressed him in verse saying:

> Bring back the caliphate to the Abbasid
> rule And leave the liar until he dies.
> Do not hesitate to do away with all
> plots and conspiracies as soon as you
> realize them.

Salah Ad-Din thought that he should wait for the proper time to change the sermon until he had completed the call to the Sunni sect and attracted the Egyptians to him.

When the Fatimid Caliph became ill, Nur Ad-Din insisted, and Salah Ad-Din gathered his advisers to ask their opinions. In the council, a non-Arab scholar called Al-Amir Al-'Alim, "the Scholar Prince", asked to undertake the task. He went to the mosque and delivered the Friday sermon in the name of the Abbasid Caliph instead of the Fatimid Caliph. Salah

Ad-Din commanded his followers to conceal that from the Fatimid Caliph. He said, "If he regains his health, he will recognize it. If he dies, we should not tell him that bad news." The sermon in the name of the Abbasid Caliph was accepted calmly by the people, without struggle, as Ibn Al-Athir mentioned in his history. Al-'Adid died in 567 A.H. (1171 C.E.), and with his death the Fatimid era ended.

Salah Ad-Din became the master over Egypt after Al-'Adid's death. He held the mourning for three days and took care of and honored Al-'Adid's family and treated them kindly.

Policy with Nur Ad-Din

After the death of the Fatimid Caliph, Salah Ad-Din increased his efforts to improve his relationship with Nur Ad-Din so that the latter would not think that he wanted to seize power. He kept the previous strong relationship that had existed at the time of his uncle Shirkuh and did not forget Nur Ad-Din's favors to him in his youth.

A short time later, he ordered the Friday sermon to be delivered in the name of Nur Ad-Din instead of the Abbasid Caliph. He also coined in his name and gave

him precious gifts from the treasures of the palace. He was grateful to Nur Ad-Din for his previous actions and showed his loyalty to him.

During this time when he ruled Egypt, some traitors among the army commanders disobeyed him and refused to live in Egypt. They sowed dissension between Salah Ad-Din and Nur Ad-Din and kindled the fires of enmity and hatred.

They succeeded in some of their low attempts to cause some disorders and conflicts. However, wise people recognized these attempts and warned against enmity between the two sides. The only beneficiary of differences and conflicts was the lurking enemy. A short time later, good faith, confidence, and sincerity between the two sides was restored. Salah Ad-Din remained loyal and under the rule of Nur Ad-Din until the latter's death in 569 A.H. (1173 C.E.).

From the foregoing preview of works achieved by Salah Ad-Din in Egypt and plots overcome by him, readers can recognize his character and political experience, his firmness and organizing of affairs.

In this period, Salah Ad-Din was able to remove all the obstacles he met and in a short time became the

master of Muslims in the East and an adept fighter in battles of liberation. Divine destiny chose him to remove the setbacks that had befallen Muslims during the Crusaders' occupation in different times. In the next chapter, we will explain how Salah Ad-Din united the Muslim countries under his rule and defeated the Franks in the decisive Battle of Hattin and how he regained glory for Islam and Muslims.

﴿ ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴾ .

﴾ That is the Grace of Allah which He bestows on whom He wills. And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower ﴿ .
(Al-Ma'idah 5:54)

- 4 -

Salah Ad-Din in Syria

Syria after Nur Ad-Din

After Nur Ad-Din's death, his son Al-Malik As-Salih Isma'il inherited his kingdom. He had not yet reached his majority, being only eleven years old. Shams Ad-Din ibn Al-Muqadim was his guardian and trustee. The princes in Syria vied with one another and attempted to weaken, slander and plot against one another. The young king knew nothing about the state's affairs. He was a toy in the hand of those princes who competed to usurp the throne for their personal purposes.

Saif Ad-Din, Al-Malik As-Salih's cousin and the ruler of Mosul, seized Nur Ad-Din's cities in Al-Jazirah (the area between the Tigris and the Euphrates Rivers) and permitted other princes to rule the cities under their control. Some princes resorted to treaties with the Crusaders to support them against the other princes. Divisions, conflicts and dispute over authority prevailed in the countries and the conditions worsened. Destiny chose Salah Ad-Din to rescue the countries from shameful divisions and hateful differences.

Damascus Sends for Salah Ad-Din

Salah Ad-Din knew about the struggles and disorders. However, he waited for the proper time in which to intervene. He was afraid of the Syrians' anger and objection if he intervened at the wrong time. Therefore, he always sent messages to Al-Malik As-Salih Isma'il showing his sincerity and loyalty to him. He coined in his name, had the Friday sermon delivered in his name, and showed the Syrians that he was taking care of the young king's interests.

The people of Damascus knew that Saif Ad-Din had seized the cities of Al-Jazirah; that Shams Ad-Din, the guardian of the young king, had made a treaty with the Crusaders in Jerusalem; and that Nur Ad-Din's princes were doing their best to usurp the throne for their own interests. Therefore, they sent a message to Salah Ad-Din asking him to rescue them and limit the disorder and sedition. They asked him to take charge of their country's affairs and protect it from dangers and risks.

Salah Ad-Din in Damascus

Salah Ad-Din was very happy when he received the invitation to visit Damascus, for it was a justification to intervene in the state's affairs. He went to Damascus

without fearing the Franks. Rather, he trusted in Allah, in himself, and in his strength.

Salah Ad-Din traveled to Busra, whose prince welcomed him generously with open arms, then arrived in Damascus in Rabi' Al-Awal 570 A.H. (1174 C.E.). He lived in his father's house for a while until the castle was surrendered to him. Afterwards, he went to it and seized much of its wealth and treasures. He did not exploit authority for collecting money, accumulating wealth or indulging in worldly pleasures and a luxurious life. To the contrary, he lived a life of sufficiency. We will mention in the chapter concerning his virtues and characteristics that Salah Ad-Din died in poverty.

How did Salah Ad-Din spend this wealth and treasures? He distributed it among the poor and needy in order to accomplish the principles of social justice and eliminate ignorance, poverty, and diseases, in accordance with Islamic teachings.

The popular delegations received him by stately procession expressing their joy and happiness. They pinned their hopes on him that he could unite the country, free Jerusalem, and establish the Muslim entity in the whole world.

Poets exhorted him to jihad and to achieve the hoped-for victory. Wajish Al-'Asadi addressed him in verse saying:

> Victory and success have been accomplished at your hand, so try to achieve them more and more.
>
> By Allah, Salah Ad-Din resembles a lion that ravens many preys if it jumps.
>
> You conquered Jallaq, which was a fortified border, and rebuilt what was ruined.
>
> It asked your help in a humble way when there was no other helper and people decided to run away.
>
> You returned life to it as you did in Egypt, and regained justice after it had gone away.
>
> This is the champion who achieved victory for Islam and showed its way and humiliated the disbelievers and Crusaders.
>
> He rejected people's praises because he is humble, and refused worldly pleasures because he is ascetic.
>
> If he had not saved Syria, monuments would have been destroyed and its marks would have

disappeared for a long time.

Nashu Ad-Dawlah Abul-Fadl also wrote poetry:

> He came late to Damascus, after they had prayed to their Lord. I was touched by harm.
>
> All praises and thanks are always to Allah for His graces and bounty.
>
> He also granted us a king whose era was one of His servants.
>
> Allah put His secret in him, so he became well
>
> Known in the East and West.

Salah Ad-Din sat in the House of Justice in Damascus to remove injustice, give people their rights, and remove unjust taxes imposed by the rulers. Sa'adah ibn 'Abdullah wrote a poem about this:

> You removed injustice from the people of Damascus when you came.
>
> So, you occupied a high rank in the palace and put on the crown of honor.
>
> The subjects' hands reaped the fruits of security from its garden.

After Salah Ad-Din's power had become firm in Damascus, he emphasized in his messages and

dialogues that he had come to Damascus to support Al-Malik As-Salih. For instance, after taking control of Damascus, he said to the messenger of Aleppo, "You should know that I did not come to Damascus except to unite the word of Islam, set matters right, guard the public, block the enemies, educate Nur Ad-Din's son, and get rid of the aggressors."

In Homs, Hamah and Aleppo

After he had conquered Damascus, he stayed a short while organizing its affairs and rectifying the evil in it. Then he appointed his brother Saif Ad-Din Taghtakin as ruler over it and went to Homs. He conquered it except for the castle. He left his commanders to besiege it and protect the city, then marched to Hamah. The ruler of Hamah was 'Izz Ad-Din Jurdik, who had been one of his lieutenants in the third expedition to Egypt. He did not surrender to Salah Ad-Din. However, Salah Ad-Din told Jurdik that he had come to protect the city from the Franks and retake the cities of Al-Jazirah occupied by Saif Ad-Din, the ruler of Mosul. He told him also that he would obey the young Al-Malik As-Salih Isma'il. Hamah's ruler was convinced and surrendered to him. He also accepted to serve as a messenger from Salah Ad-Din to Sa'd Ad-Din

Kamashtakin, the ruler of Aleppo.

Sa'd Ad-Din was the one who had seized Aleppo from the original ruler, Shams Ad-Din ibn Ad-Dayah, and replaced him. He imprisoned Ibn Ad-Dayah, his brothers, and other princes and allied with the Crusaders to support him.

Salah Ad-Din sent his messenger Jurdik to the usurper Sa'd Ad-Din with the recommendation that he release the prisoners and Ibn Ad-Dayah. When Jurdik reached Aleppo and told him the message, Sa'd Ad-Din imprisoned him with Ibn Ad-Dayah. Undoubtedly, Kamashtakin would carry the responsibility for his action, for Salah Ad-Din lay in wait to encounter him to make him pay for unjustly and hostilely imprisoning them.

Kamashtakin did not stop at this. He sent a messenger to Rashid Ad-Din Sinan, the head of the Isma'iliya[1] sect who lived in Misyaf, asking for his help

(1) Imam Al-Ghazali says in the treatise *Fada'ih Al-Bataniyah 'an Mabadi' Al-Isma'iliyah* that their sect belonged outwardly to the Shi'ah sect, but inwardly they were pure disbelievers. They believed in absolute licentiousness and removal of hijab. They also permitted the prohibited and denied other religions. However, they denied these beliefs if they were ascribed to them. Rather, they ascribed them to Isma'il Ja'far As-Sadiq.

and support. Rashid Ad-Din sent a band to kill Salah Ad-Din. They followed him into the Jushan camp in the west of the Aleppo region and attempted to enter his tent, but the soldiers attacked them.

Another assault took place while he was in 'Azaz, a village in Aleppo, in 571 A.H., when some fedayeen attacked his tent. Three men succeeded in entering his tent wearing military uniforms like those of his guards and injured his head. He was nearly killed but was saved by his wearing a coat of mail. The Isma'ili fedayeen fought with Sultan Salah Ad-Din's body-guards and each side had injuries. When other soldiers joined Salah Ad-Din, the fedayeen ran away. Salah Ad-Din's soldiers pursued them and killed some of them.

The sultan planned revenge. When he came back from Aleppo the following year, he headed to their castle in Misyaf in the west of Hamah and prepared mangonels for them. He killed and captured most of them, regained the money and cattle, etc. that they had taken, destroyed their homes, and taught them a hard lesson.

When Kamashtakin was disappointed, he asked the Crusaders' support. Upon this, the Crusaders sent an army led by Raymond III. Salah Ad-Din liberated

Aleppo and then went to Homs to fight against the Crusaders. When they knew that Salah Ad-Din was coming, they withdrew. Salah Ad-Din then headed to Damascus and conquered Ba'albak.

During this period, Salah Ad-Din faced difficulties from the plotting of Nur Ad-Din's princes against him, for the reasons that follow.

After Salah Ad-Din had conquered several cities in Syria, they feared that he would conquer more and seize power. Therefore, they asked Saif Ad-Din Ghazi, the ruler of Mosul, to support his cousin Al-Malik As-Salih. He prepared soldiers, weapons, and provisions to aid his cousin.

He arrived in Aleppo and joined forces with its army and headed towards Salah Ad-Din. The latter asked them for reconciliation in order to prevent bloodshed, sedition and disorder that would be in favor of the Franks. Among his offers was that he hand over all the cities he had conquered on the condition that he remains in Damascus as the king's deputy. However, they rejected that and asked him to hand over all the cities and return to Egypt. Salah Ad-Din found no other solution but to fight them. The Arab poet said:

If one does not find a safe way but the
way that is full of risks and dangers,
There is no other choice
save to walk on this way.

He made preparations and encountered them near Hamah, defeating them on 9 Ramadan 570 A.H. He terrorized and horrified them so much that a soldier did not care about his comrade. They fled to Aleppo. Salah Ad-Din pursued them, seized their provisions as spoils, and surrounded them in Aleppo. After this defeat, Saif Ad-Din went back to Mosul to resume preparations. Salah Ad-Din followed him and encountered his army at Sultan Hill. Salah Ad-Din triumphed over them again and captured most of Mosul's soldiers and took their baggage as spoils.

Afterwards, Salah Ad-Din went to Baza'ah, and the castle fell into his hands. Next he occupied Manbaj, then he besieged 'Azaz until they surrendered to him and he took 'Azaz castle. He then headed again to Aleppo. When he had Aleppo under siege, Nur Ad-Din's young daughter, the sister of Al-Malik As-Salih, went out to meet him. Salah Ad-Din welcomed and honored her and gave her many precious gifts. He

asked her about the requests of her subjects. She replied that they wanted 'Azaz city. He granted her the city, and then, with due respect and esteem for her father's position, he himself accompanied her back to the walls of Aleppo.

When the blockade intensified, Al-Malik As-Salih consulted his subjects and decided to accept reconciliation. He stipulated that only the cities that Salah Ad-Din had conquered were to be under his control. According to the agreement, Salah Ad-Din became the ruler over Damascus, Homs, Hamah, Al-Ma'arrah, and other small cities and their castles. Al-Malik As-Salih controlled only Aleppo and other cities next to it.

After this reconciliation, Salah Ad-Din returned to Egypt in 576 A.H. in order to review and settle its affairs. He had hardly arrived in Egypt when he was told that Al-Malik As-Salih had died. He was only nineteen years old. He had decreed by will that his cousin 'Izz Ad-Din Mas'ud, the ruler of Mosul, succeed him. When 'Izz Ad-Din was informed, he departed Mosul immediately to take over the new position in Aleppo. As soon as he took office, his brother 'Imad Ad-Din, the ruler of Sanjar, asked to trade places with him. 'Izz Ad-Din agreed to his request and became the

ruler of Sanjar while 'Imad Ad-Din took over Aleppo on 13 Muharram 578 A.H.

At last Salah Ad-Din was able to subjugate 'Imad Ad-Din to his rule when he conquered Aleppo. The people received him joyously on 17 Safar 579 A.H.

Poets and orators praised his actions and cited his exploits and immortal heroism. Among the wonderful sayings was that of Mohi Ad-Din ibn Az-Zaki, Damascus' judge, who praised Salah Ad-Din in a poem saying:

> Your conquest of Aleppo
> with the sword in Safar
> is a good omen of conquering
> Jerusalem in Rajab.

It is agreed historically that Jerusalem was, in fact, conquered in Rajab four years after Aleppo's conquest.

Among those who praised and congratulated Sultan Salah Ad-Din in poetry after Aleppo's conquest was Yusuf Al-Bara'i:

> When you conquered Aleppo, it became illustrious with joys and light prevailing.
> hey gave you the leadership by which you will

have all acclaim and honor over you.

Abu Taiy An-Najjar praised the status of Aleppo saying:

> Aleppo is the master of Syria, and it increased
> in glory and beauty when Yusuf came.
> It is the origin of glory. Whoever attained
> the highest of it, increased in majesty and glory.
> The place of glory is that: whoever lived
> in it, had all glory, pride and majesty.
> And whoever ruled it, ruled all
> lands of hills and mountains.

To summarize, in this period Salah Ad-Din faced three conspiracies: from the Isma'ilis, Franks, and Nur Ad-Din's princes. These three powers allied against him in order to impede Islamic unity in Iraq, Syria, and Egypt. However, he triumphed over them with the wisdom, power, determination and acuity that Allah granted to him.

In the next chapter we will explain how this hero was able to unite the Islamic countries under his leadership and truthfully regain the spirit of jihad against the enemy Crusaders.

- 5 -

Countries United under His Rule

1. After the death of Sultan Nur Ad-Din, the hero Salah Ad-Din had every opportunity to unite the Muslim world under his flag. He could unite them, one after the other, because of his military talents and his experience in politics and war. In Yemen, the various parties were all in continuous conflict and fighting against each other during Salah Ad-Din's era. As a result, the country became shattered, torn to pieces. The Hamadanites at San'a and the Najahites in Zubaid fought against each other over the ruling authority. In addition, there was a false propagandist who claimed that he was *Al-Mahdi Al-Munatazhar*.[1] He caused some unrest and disruption that led to massacres, civil strife, and anarchy in Yemen. Salah Ad-Din was pained to see Muslims killing and plotting against one another, so he sent his brother Turan Shah to Yemen to end the discord and strife. He succeeded in joining it to Egypt and Syria under his rule.

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(1) *Al-Mahdi Al-Muntazhar* is "The Directed One", a ruler who will appear upon the earth in the last days and guide people to the right path. (translator)

2. Turan Shah went with his army via the Nile River until the city of Qus. Then he went by land to the Red Sea coast and from there sailed to Jeddah and Yemen. He was able to seize the Zubaid territory and some other forts. Some historians stated that he conquered more than eighty forts and cities in Yemen. It seems that the Yemeni people rejoiced at Turan Shah's coming, for he would stop the disorder and anarchy in which they lived. Some Yemenis paved the way for Turan Shah to conquer the state without bloodshed, for castle guards sent him the keys of the citadels to spare peoples' blood. They desired to live in stability. When he had conquered Yemen, he took counsel with his companions in choosing the proper headquarters. He decided to take Ta'z city as headquarters.
3. Salah Ad-Din appointed his brother Turan Shah as ruler over Yemen, and then appointed his brother Taghtakin ibn Ayyub, who remained its ruler until his death in 593 A.H. The Ayyubid rule in Yemen remained for more than 80 years, from 569 to 652 A.H.
4. The same year in which Yemen was conquered, Salah Ad-Din conquered Barqah, Tripoli, and the eastern part of Tunisia to Qabis in 569 A.H.

5. In 579 A.H., Salah Ad-Din called his brother Al-Malik Al-'Adil to attend the Islamic conference held in Damascus for ambassadors of princes in the Muslim world. Among the attendees were the Grand Sheikh Sadr Ad-Din; Shihab Ad-Din Bashr, the envoy of the Abbasid Caliph An-Nasr Lidinillahi; Al-Qadi Mohi Ad-Din Ash-Shahrazuri; Baha' Ad-Din ibn Shaddad, the ambassador of Mosul's ruler; and Mu'izz Ad-Din Sinjar, ambassador of Al-Jazirah's ruler; and many others. Salah Ad-Din endeavored to remove all disagreements and conflicts among the Muslim princes and implant instead brotherhood and reconciliation. All the ambassadors agreed to unite except for Mosul's ambassador. He was the only one who disagreed with and strongly opposed Salah Ad-Din.

6. When Mosul's ruler refused to unite with the Muslim World, Salah Ad-Din was obliged to fight him to deter and guide him to the right way. When Salah Ad-Din besieged the city, its ruler, 'Izz Ad-Din, submitted and reconciled in the Harran Treaty of 581 A.H. According to the treaty, 'Izz Ad-Din handed over the cities of Shahar Zur, Al-Qarabili, and Tafjak, and their surrounding provinces, to Salah Ad-Din. On the other hand, Salah Ad-Din

handed over Mosul to 'Izz Ad-Din provided that the Friday sermon and coins remained in Salah Ad-Din's name. In addition, 'Izz Ad-Din was to follow Salah Ad-Din's policy.

Ibn Wasil stated in his book *Mafraj Al-Kurub fi Tawarikh Bani Ayyub* that after the Harran Treaty, Salah Ad-Din gathered under one banner soldiers from Mosul, Sanjar, Al-Jazirah, Arbil, Harran, Diar Bakr, and other places, after they had been factions.

7. One of the matters that Salah Ad-Din undertook was to send a message to the Abbasid Caliph Al-Mustadi' in Baghdad. Al-Qadi Al-Fadl, Salah Ad-Din's vizier, wrote the message in which he reminded them of Salah Ad-Din's feats of jihad and his achievements, such as his fighting against the enemy; conquering Egypt, Yemen and North Africa; and changing the Friday sermon to be in the name of the Abbasid Caliph. Also, he asked the Abbasid Caliph to appoint him ruler over Egypt, Morocco, Yemen, Syria, and other countries conquered later by him. He also asked that his brother or son be appointed after him. The Caliph Al-Mustadi' responded to their request by sending delegations to specify the states he wanted to rule. He also gave presents and robes of honor to the

delegation and the Sultan's relatives.

8. From the aforementioned, we see that Salah Ad-Din joined numerous states and cities under one banner. He ruled many cities and towns, from Ramlah to the Nile basin, and from North Africa to Tripoli, and he conquered Yemen, Aden, Tripoli coast, and a part of Tunisia to Qabis, in addition to Egypt, Syria, and northern Iraq. In these states and towns, the Friday sermon was delivered in his name. The countries under his rule were as follows: North Iraq (Kurdistan), Greater Syria, Yemen, Egypt, Morocco, and the coast of North Africa.

   Undoubtedly, Muslim nations set great hopes on Salah Ad-Din and saw a good omen in him to achieve Muslim unity. After this strong unity, the time had come to attack the Crusaders in Jerusalem and expel them in a decisive war that history would record and generations would be proud of.

9. Poets viewed the unity under Salah Ad-Din's rule as goodness for the *ummah* (nation) and a glory to Islam, because the *ummah* had suffered so much from incompetent rulers. Ibn Sanan explained that in a poem saying:

   The nation did not find a good ruler to

administer it; every ruler is incompetent and has a mind like a child.

As soon as Salah Ad-Din came to power, corruption was removed and diseases were remedied.

They also believed that the unity of the Muslims' word was the starting point to liberate Jerusalem from the spiteful and ignoble Crusaders and to make Islam triumph. The conquest of Jerusalem would be a step to other conquests because it was the aim, hope, and the complete control over Palestine. Al-'Imad Al-Asbahani praised Salah Ad-Din in a poem:

With your conquest, Islam became proud, and with your victory, days became lightened.

You provided the world and religion

with strength and hopes.

You have to complete the conquest

by conquering Jerusalem.

Go ahead in conquering, so that system may continue, and be a Muslim in order to make Islam triumph.

- 6 -

Crusaders' Plots and Wars[1]

What Were the Crusades?

The Crusades were military campaigns carried out by Europe for two centuries. The aim was to liberate Jerusalem from the hands of Muslims and to limit the advance of Muslims who had begun to invade the rest of the world.

Reasons for the Crusades

The most important reasons for the Crusades are as follows:

1. The Crusaders hated Islam and Muslims because they had conquered Jerusalem and other places that had been under Christian authority in parts of Asia, Africa, and Europe.

2. Constantinople was under threat of occupation by the Muslim Seljuqs, who had spread closer to it. The Byzantine Emperor Alexius Comnenus appealed for the help of the Christian countries against the Muslims.

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(1) Most of this chapter is taken from Muhammad Al-'Arusi, *Al-Hurub As-Salibiyah fi Al-Mashriq wa Al-Maghrib*, pp. 19, 39 - 40.

3. Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem complained of bad treatment from Muslims. After returning to Europe, they alleged that they had suffered hardships and injustice from Muslims. Among the most determined who implanted hatred between Christians and Muslims was the French monk Peter the Hermit.
4. Religious zeal, the desire to liberate Jerusalem from Muslims, and forgiveness of sins for those who participated in war against Muslims were great motivators. This zeal was aroused by the sermons of priests, bishops, and the pope in church congregations.
5. The Fatimids in Egypt were inclined to ally with the Byzantines to help them liberate their lands occupied by Seljuq Muslims.

We should mention here that Pope Urban II delivered an important speech in the Council of Clermont in France. They agreed to wage the first Crusade in 488 A.H. (1095 C.E.). The speech indicated the animosity and enmity for Islam and Muslims. He declared, "This war is not to conquer one city but to conquer the whole of Asia and to seize treasures and wealth which are innumerable. You have to perform

pilgrimage in Jerusalem and liberate the Holy Land from embezzlers; you have to take this land because it, as the Torah declared, is a land flowing with milk and honey."(1)

First Crusade and Occupation of Jerusalem

In 486 A.H., the French monk Peter the Hermit visited Jerusalem. When he returned, he met the pope and asked him to call for the Crusades. The pope held a council in Piacenza in northern Italy, then the Council of Clermont (France) in which they agreed to launch a war.

The Crusader armies agreed to meet at Constantinople. When the first contingent, which was extremely disordered and chaotic, crossed Asia Minor, the Seljuq Qalij Arsalan defeated them in a big battle near Nicaea, a city close to Constantinople.

The other contingents, organized by princes and feudal lords, came from southern and northern France [and thus they were known as Franks] and from southern Italy. They gathered at Constantinople. When they crossed Asia Minor, Qalij Arsalan intercepted them and war broke out between the two sides. The

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(1) *Al-Akhbar As-Sunniyah*, page 12.

Crusaders defeated him and occupied Antioch after a siege that lasted for eight months. Afterwards, they occupied Jerusalem after a month of siege in 492 A.H. (1099 C.E.). They did all sorts of deeds in contradiction to human mercy and divine religions and committed hideous atrocities against the rights of Muslims. They killed about seventy thousand Muslims till the blood flowed copiously in Al-Aqsa Mosque and the quarters and alleys that branched off from it.

Ibn Al-Athir described the resentment of Islamic society at that time saying:

People ran away from Syria to Baghdad in the company of Al-Qadi Abu Sa'id Al-Harwi in Ramadan. He recorded in his message horrible actions and terrible crimes that filled the eyes with tears and hearts became ill. They offered Friday prayer, asked for help, cried, and remembered the killing of Muslims, the capture of women and children, the plunder of money. So, they broke their fast this day.

Thereby the Crusaders dwelled in the Syrian lands and set up numerous principalities on the coasts extending from the Gulf of Alexandria to Ascalon and from the Gulf of 'Aqabah Gulf to the north of Ar-Ruha (now known as Urufa, Turkey) .

Reasons for the Crusaders' Victory

The most important reason for the Crusaders' success in occupying Jerusalem and the surrounding countries was the conflicts, disputes and disagreements within the Muslim society. The enemy was not able to penetrate into the Muslim lands, dominate the holy places, and rule Jerusalem (from which the Prophet ﷺ ascended to the seven heavens) except when they saw the condition of the Muslim *ummah* with its disputes, weakness and decline. They then seized the opportunity and attacked the Muslim world, destroyed their buildings, and regarded the noble people as ignoble ones.

Therefore, many historians talked about this period and the conditions of the Muslim society in the First Crusade with examples such as these:

- While the Crusaders blockaded Jerusalem, Muhammad ibn Malikshah fought against his half-brother Barkiyaruq.
- The Franks took over Acre while Syrian kings fought against each other.
- The Muslim countries were divided and plotted against each other. Some Muslim countries asked the Franks for help in fighting other Muslims.

Other historians also recorded other comments about

this era, such as those of Ibn Al-Athir and others. The comments prove that the Muslim *ummah* was the reason for this occupation. And Allah did not harm them but they harmed their own selves.

Second Crusade: Prelude to Victory at Hattin

We mentioned above that the declining state of the Muslim society was a major factor in the success of the Crusaders in occupying Jerusalem. Therefore, there was no solution to overcome the Crusaders without a comprehensive renaissance and unity. Indications of this renaissance started when 'Imad Ad-Din Zanki established a strong state extending from Mosul to Ma'arrat An-Nu'man in 521 A.H. 'Imad Ad-Din fought the Crusaders in numerous encounters, one of the greatest of which was in Ar-Raha, which removed its principality in 539 A.H.

Such defeats were the main reason for the escalation of the Crusades and the Second Crusade, in which King Louis V of France and Emperor Conrad III of Germany participated. They agreed to kill 'Imad Ad-Din Mahmud,[1] who governed the western part after

(1) When 'Imad Ad-Din Zanki died, he left a lot of sons. The two eldest were Saif Ad-Din and Nur Ad-Din Mahmud. The two=

the death of his father, 'Imad Ad-Din Zanki, because they regarded 'Imad Ad-Din as the major threat to the Franks. The Crusaders headed to Damascus and besieged it for a short time, then withdrew. The siege was lifted in 543 A.H. Thus, the Second Crusade failed. The withdrawal revived the Muslim society, raised its spirits, and paved the way to victory in the Battle of Hattin.

=brothers divided the kingdom into two: the eastern part for Saif Ad-Din with the capital in Mosul, and the western part for Nur Ad-Din Mahmud with the capital in Aleppo. Nur Ad-Din Mahmud's kingdom was adjacent to the Crusader states. This was one of the reasons that led to the escalation of the conflict.

- 7 -

Salah Ad-Din's Victory in the Battle of Hattin

Reasons for the Battle

We mentioned in chapter four that Salah Ad-Din established a great united kingdom that included the north of Iraq (Kurdistan), Greater Syria, Egypt, Yemen, and Barqah. He also prepared an army to invade the Franks and regain Jerusalem and other cities they occupied. But he waited for the proper time to take revenge for the massacres and crimes they had committed in Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa Mosque and to teach them a lesson they would never forget.

The time for retaliation came when the lord of Kerak, Reginald of Chtillon (Arabic: Arnat), attacked a trade caravan loyal to Salah Ad-Din in 582 A.H. (1187 C.E.). The Principality of Kerak, located between Egypt and Syria, had a truce with Salah Ad-Din. Among the articles of the truce was the permission for Muslim caravans to pass safely and peacefully back and forth between Egypt and Syria.

Reginald plundered the caravan's money and captured its men. Historians reported that when the Muslims' caravan was seized by the lord of Kerak, he

despised Islam and the Prophet ﷺ and said to the Muslim captives, "If you believe in Muhammad, call him to release you and free you from this captivity." When Salah Ad-Din was told that, he was furious and swore to kill him with his own hands. The sultan kept his oath, as we will see in the following pages.

Reginald's attack was the spark that ignited war between Salah Ad-Din and the Franks. Salah Ad-Din waged battles against them and made them taste suffering and hardships. His name became public in Europe, and mothers frightened their children with his name. However, the hero treated captives, women, and children kindly. He was regarded as an object of pride for history and an example for generations.

Battle of Hattin and Conquest of Jerusalem

After this infamous attack on the caravan, Salah Ad-Din mustered his armies and broke them into contingents to deliver an exemplary punishment to the Franks, one and all, and regain the holy city of Jerusalem, which was the place from which the Prophet ﷺ ascended to the seven heavens and the birthplace of the prophets.

During that time, the ruler of Kerak prepared an

army to attack the Muslims returning from Hajj. Salah Ad-Din called the people for jihad to protect the pilgrims. He camped at Qasr As-Salamah, near Busra, and remained till the pilgrims had come in peace and safety. The pilgrims then prayed Allah to grant victory to Salah Ad-Din and overcome his enemies who were always violating their covenants and breaking treaties. Fanaticism and resentment blinded the Franks, and enmity and ignorance hardened their hearts. They would taste of the same cup.

After making preparations, Salah Ad-Din consulted his advisers regarding the proper time for war. They fixed the date on 17 Rabi' Al-Akher 583 A.H. after the *Jumu'ah* Prayer, between the cries of "*Allahu Akbar!*" and supplications for victory.[1]

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(1) Muslims should know this fact and realize that preparations for war and achieving triumph cannot be realized only by supplications and resort to Allah, but by preparations for financial strength and for battle. Supplications and praying for victory are in the battlefield. Salah Ad-Din and the righteous caliphs before him followed this way and did as the Prophet ﷺ did in the Battles of Badr, Hunain, Al-Ahzab, and Uhud. He asked the help of Allah in the battlefield saying: "O Allah, grant me victory as You promised me. O Allah, if the enemy defeats this band of Muslims, You will not be worshiped in the earth again." This went together with the=

Salah Ad-Din left Damascus and headed to Ra's Al-Maa', which was used as a center for mustering the soldiers. His son Al-Malik Al-Afdal remained in Ra's Al-Maa' while he went to Busra, and Muzaffar Ad-Din Kubri went to Acre. From Busra, Salah Ad-Din headed to the castles of Kerak and Ash-Shubk and then returned to Tiberias. He (may Allah have mercy on him) spared no effort to keep the Muslim soldiers alert and awaken their zeal to fight for the sake of Allah. He was always grief-stricken, sad, and heavyhearted. He ate but little. When asked the reason, he replied, "How can mirth and food and sleep be agreeable to me while Jerusalem is in the hands of the Crusaders?" His companion and friend Al-Qadi Baha' Ad-Din ibn Shaddad described his state during the Crusades saying:

The occupation of Jerusalem was a great matter that

=financial preparations. How well a poet expressed this when he addressed Salah Ad-Din saying:

You left generations of friends whose life stories filled the world with basil and perfume.
Their conquests were righteousness and mercy, and their policies were justice and good deeds.
They realized that religion is not only supplications and prayer beads,
But also religion is in prayers and the battlefield.

a mountain could not bear.... He was like a mother who is bereaved of her child. He rode from one place to another urging the people to jihad and wandered about places crying, "Oh for Islam!" and his eyes shed tears. The more he looked at Acre and the trials that afflicted the people, the more he urged the people to jihad. At that time, he ate nothing. He drank medicine given by the doctor. I was told by some of his doctors that from Friday until Sunday he ate only an insignificant amount because he was so interested in the war.

When the Crusaders were sure that Salah Ad-Din was organizing a great undertaking against them, they made preparations and headed to Tiberias. The two sides encountered at a place called Hattin. In the morning, the sun was hot like fire. The Muslims took control of the water sources to destroy them by thirst. The hero Salah Ad-Din seized the opportunity, attacked and dispersed them. Their troops withdrew to the Horns of Hattin, terrified, thirsty and fearful. The battle ended with a great victory for Salah Ad-Din and a hateful defeat for the Crusaders, and none escaped. Salah Ad-Din killed ten thousand persons and took captives from them. He also killed the Bishop of Acre and seized his cross. It was the most disastrous

defeat they had suffered.

The Muslims advanced onto the mountain summit. The remaining Crusaders were the King of Jerusalem and one hundred fifty cavalrymen who could not fight because of their severe thirst, fear and exhaustion. The king and cavalrymen were captured. Reginald, who was the reason for the battle, was also captured. Sultan Salah Ad-Din consulted his advisers and those of his followers who had good opinions in a tent. They prostrated to Allah in gratitude for the victory.

Then he ordered soldiers to bring the King, Guy of Lusignan, and Reginald, Lord of Kerak, to the tent. He brought water for them. The king drank most of the cup and gave the rest to Reginald. Then the sultan said, "We did not give him water to safeguard him." He rebuked Reginald for attacking the Muslim caravan and being insolent towards the Prophet ﷺ . He killed him in order to fulfill his promise and keep his oath. At that, the king became afraid, but the sultan soothed him and calmed him down saying, "It is not usual for kings to kill other kings, but he exceeded the limits." He sent him and his followers to Damascus in honor.

The battle was a decisive victory for Salah Ad-Din over the Crusaders. The usurper Franks were defeated

because the Muslim army was well organized, well prepared, well skilled, and well led. They succeeded militarily by choosing the proper site for fighting. Therefore, the battle was a fatal blow to the Crusaders.

After the victory, Salah Ad-Din marched to Acre harbor. All the people surrendered in 583 A.H., and the Crusaders removed to Tyre. Salah Ad-Din conquered other cities and castles around Acre, such as Tabnain, Sidon, Jubail, and Beirut. Then he marched through the coast to Ascalon, which he blockaded for fourteen days before they surrendered to him. Afterwards, he blockaded Jerusalem and prevented provisions from reaching the Crusaders from the coast. He headed to Jerusalem after conquering Ramlah, Ad-Darum, Bethlehem, and An-Natrun.

At that time, a Muslim captive in Jerusalem sent a poem addressing him on behalf of Al-Aqsa Mosque:

> O king who lowered the crosses to half-mast,
> Darkness came to occupy Jerusalem.
> All mosques have become pure save me,
> Whose honor is still impure.

The sultan wanted Jerusalem to be safeguarded, so he decided to enter it by treaty rather than by force lest

he violate its sanctity or destroy any of its buildings. In doing so, he imitated 'Umar ibn Al-Khattab when he conquered it before. He sent an envoy to ask them to surrender on the conditions he stated. He said to them, "I believe in the sanctity of Jerusalem as you believe. I do not want to blockade or attack the holy place." However, the Franks, without patience or considering the consequences, refused to surrender. Therefore, Salah Ad-Din insisted on conquering the city by war and resistance. After a week of blockade, the city surrendered to Salah Ad-Din and accepted reconciliation on the conditions that they leave within forty days and that a man should pay ten dinars, a woman five, and a boy two dinars as a ransom. Whoever could not pay would be taken captive.

Jubair composed a poem in praise of Salah Ad-Din after the latter had conquered Jerusalem:

> The best two conquests for Jerusalem were started with the second caliph and ended with your conquest.

The sultan appointed persons to collect the ransom from the Crusaders before they evacuated on 27 Rajab 583 A.H., the anniversary of the day on which the Prophet ﷺ ascended to the seven heavens. The

prophecy of Al-Qadi Muhi Ad-Din ibn Az-Zaki of Damascus came true when he addressed Salah Ad-Din saying:

> Your conquest of Aleppo with the sword in Safar
>
> is a good omen of conquering Jerusalem in Rajab.

The sultan brought Al-Qadi Muhi Ad-Din ibn Az-Zaki to deliver the first Friday sermon in Al-Aqsa Mosque after a century of occupation. This day was a memorable one on which the prayer was blessed with joy and a large number of people. We present his sermon as it was recorded in the second volume of the book Ar-Rawdatain. Among his sayings after the introduction were:

> O people, good news will come to you with the Grace of Allah, which is the highest goal and the highest degree. Surely, Allah has enabled you to regain this object of persistent pursuit (Jerusalem) after nearly a hundred years of it being in the hands of the polytheists and their abuse. Also, Allah has enabled you to purify the house in which Allah has permitted you to raise and mention and remember His name. And He has permitted you to remove all

signs and drawings of polytheism that extended on its portico and replace them with the pillars of monotheism upon which it was based, and with piety upon which it was built. It was the residence of your father Abraham, the place from which the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ ascended to the seven heavens, your first *qiblah* after the advent of Islam, the seat of the messengers and prophets, the destination of the righteous people. It is in the cradle of Islam, the place where the Revelation descended, the place where the orders and prohibitions were revealed, the land in which people will gather on the Day of Resurrection, and the holy land that was mentioned in the noble Qur'an. It is the mosque in which the Prophet ﷺ led the angels near to Allah in prayer, the land in which Allah sent His servant, messengers, and His word that He bestowed on Mary and a spirit proceeding from Him: Jesus, whom Allah honored with His message and prophecy. He did not raise him above the rank of servitude. Allah says:

﴿ لَّن يَسْتَنكِفَ ٱلْمَسِيحُ أَن يَكُونَ عَبْدًا لِّلَّهِ ﴾

﴾ ***The Messiah will never be proud to reject to be a slave to Allah*** ﴿ . (An-Nisa' 4:172)

He also says:

﴿ لَقَدْ كَفَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْمَسِيحُ ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ ﴾ .

﴾ ***Surely, in disbelief are they who say that Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary*** ﴿ .

(Al-M'idah 5:17)

It is the first *qiblah*, the second mosque that was built after the Holy Mosque (in Makkah), and the third mosque in rank after the Holy Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque. It is also the only mosque to which people should travel to visit after the two holy mosques, and the site in which agreements are signed. If you had not been chosen and preferred by Allah above other nations, He would not have conferred on you this virtue by which no one can keep pace with you or compete with you. Allah blessed you, as He provided you with an army that was shown miracles like those of the Prophet ﷺ, battles like that of Badr, firm wills like that of Abu Bakr, conquests like those of 'Umar, troops like those of 'Uthman, and devastations like those of 'Ali.

You repeated the feats of the Battles of Qadisiya, Yarmuk, and Khaibar, and made attacks like those of Khalid ibn Al-Walid. May Allah bless your efforts, and may He accept your sacrifice of blood

and reward you with Paradise, for it is the house of those who are happy. You should appreciate this grace and thank Him for choosing this grace for you.

After the great conquest, poets, scholars, writers, and chroniclers arrived one after the other to deliver poems and essays of praise for Salah Ad-Din. For example, the poet and scholar Abu Al-Hassan ibn 'Ali said:

> Allah provided this king with heavenly soldiers .
>
> Whoever does not believe, this conquest is evidence.
>
> This conquest is like those of the Prophet.
>
> It cannot be appreciated by wealth; it is only appreciated by thanks.
>
> Crusader kings who were always strong became captives in his hands.
>
> Jerusalem and other occupied lands cried ninety years ago, but Muslim leaders were deaf and blind.
>
> Now, Salah Ad-Din responds to their request by order from Allah, Who supports those who are in need.

> When Allah enclosed everyone's record book, Salah Ad-Din's record cannot be enclosed because of so many good deeds he performed.

Muhammad ibn Asad Al-Halabi, known as Al-Jawani and head of the Prophet's descendants in Egypt, wrote in a poem:

> I cannot believe that Jerusalem was conquered and the Crusaders were beaten.
>
> Their king was chained for the first time in Muslim camps.
>
> The Levant was conquered and Jerusalem, the place in which people will be accounted on the Day of Judgment, was liberated.
>
> O Yusuf As-Seddiq who conquered Jerusalem as 'Umar purified it from Crusaders before,
>
> You spread Islamic teachings as 'Uthman did before.
>
> You supported Muhammad's prophecy as a lion.

Salah Ad-Din's Treatment of the Crusaders

We mentioned previously that among the articles that were signed between Salah Ad-Din and the

Crusaders was that the Franks were to leave Jerusalem within forty days and pay a ransom of ten dinars for each man, five for each woman, and two for each boy. Whoever was unable to pay would be taken captive.

However, Salah Ad-Din treated them kindly and mercifully in order to show the goodness and forgiveness of Islam to the aggressive, unjust and despotic kings, and to make them realize that Islam is the religion of mercy and humanity. It did not appear to raise a sword over persons, or to kill a *dhimmi* (non-Muslim under its rule), or to unjustly assault people.

How did Salah Ad-Din treat the captive Crusaders?

When the sultan saw that a large number of the Franks were carrying their aged parents and relatives on their backs, he was sorrowful and could not bear to see it. He brought money to be distributed among them and riding animals to carry their heavy loads to lands that they could not reach without distress.

He was kind and pitying to women. There was a wealthy woman, wife of a Byzantine king, who had become a nun and established a place to worship Allah alone. Many people gathered around her and followed her way. The sultan safeguarded her and her followers.

When Queen Sybil asked Salah Ad-Din's permission to leave with her followers, he addressed her kindly and mercifully and pitied her unfortunate condition. He took her to her husband, who was imprisoned in Nablus, and permitted her to be beside him. Large numbers of women who were carrying their children in their arms followed her. When they arrived to the sultan, they addressed him saying, "O Sultan, as you see, we are going out now. We are wives, mothers, and daughters to those prisoners. We leave this city forever and leave our prisoners who are our guardians and protectors. If you kill them, we will lose life. If you release them, you will grant us all favors and ease our pains and poverty because we cannot live without a guardian."

The sultan was moved by their words, so he released youths to their mothers, husbands to their wives, and fathers to their daughters, and guaranteed to treat the remaining prisoners kindly and mercifully.

Stevenson stated that the sultan left a large number without paying ransom. Pool reported that Arnold stated that the sultan permitted a day for the disabled and poor to go out without paying ransom. He also permitted clerics and other people with much wealth to

take whatever they wanted, and the Muslims bought what they could not carry.

Al-Malik Al-'Adil also asked his brother Salah Ad-Din's permission to exempt seven thousand disabled and poor from paying ransom. He exempted ten thousand.

Salah Ad-Din's treatment of the Franks after the victory at Hattin was better than the misdeeds they dealt to each other, and better than the revengeful and spiteful treatment they dealt the Muslims in the First Crusade.

Prince 'Ali related from the British historian Mill that a number of Christians who left Jerusalem went to Christian Antioch and their allotment from the prince was nothing but refusal to host them and expulsion. They headed to Muslim countries, which welcomed them. Prince 'Ali also said:

> Mishud described the condition of those who were expelled from Jerusalem and what they met from their Christian brethren. They suffered starvation, poverty, and lack of human respect in Syria. Also, Tripoli closed its gates before them.... A woman was compelled to throw her child into the sea and cursed the Christian people who refused to welcome them.

The patriarch left with much wealth and luggage and paid nothing to release the poor captive Crusaders. Pool described the patriarch as a man with no conscience. The sultan was asked, "Why did you not confiscate his wealth and take it to strengthen Muslims' affairs?" He replied, "I prefer to take ten dinars than to betray him." Pool commented on this: "The Muslim sultan taught the Christian cleric the meaning of noble morals and righteousness."

As for the rancorous treatment the Muslims and Islam received in the First Crusade, we mentioned in the previous chapter the cruel massacres, the thousands destroyed, and the blood baths they committed. History recorded these cruel actions they committed in Jerusalem in 492 A.H. (1099 C.E.). Prince 'Ali repeated what the British historian Mill reported from Mishud's description of that happened when they entered Jerusalem:

> Muslims were killed in the streets and inside their houses. Some people threw themselves from the highest wall to escape from massacres. Others hid in towers, palaces, even in mosques. However, the Christians followed them wherever they were.... Infantry and cavalry walked over Muslim corpses

and followed the other fugitives who were searching for a shelter.

Prince 'Ali also related from Mishud:

> Muslims who were kept alive in order to take their wealth were slaughtered. Others were burned alive to the extent that some Muslims were obliged to throw themselves from the roofs of houses, others were taken from hiding places to public courtyards and killed above the other corpses. Muslim women wept, children cried, and the scene of the place in which the Christ forgave his enemies was full of murders.

Mill added, "There was neither help nor pity for those who were killed without guilt. Seventy thousand innocent persons were killed."

Have you seen such noble magnanimity and forgiveness towards enemies like that of Salah Ad-Din?

Have you seen the like that horrible cruelty of the Crusaders?

May Allah have mercy on the poet who said:

> When we ruled Jerusalem, we spread justice.
>
> When you (Crusaders) ruled it, bloodshed spread.

You permitted the killing of captives

While we forgave and favored them.

This difference between you and us is sufficient for us.

Every container sprinkles water inside it.

Hatti declared that the difference between the treatment of Muslims to civilian Crusaders and Crusaders to civilian Muslims eighty-eight years previous was very obvious.

Blockade of Acre and Third Crusade

We mentioned before that the Crusaders left Jerusalem, Acre, and other cities to go to Tyre, in Lebanon, under the protection of Muslim troops. In spite of accepting peace and a treaty, the Crusaders violated their treaties and broke their promises.

They gathered in Tyre and agreed to violate the treaty with Salah Ad-Din. They headed to Acre and besieged it, depending on their united troops and provisions from Europe. The siege resounded in history because it lasted for two years, and the two parties showed unprecedented bravery and strength.

The Crusaders marched to Acre on 7 Rajab 585 A.H. (1189 C.E.) and blockaded it by land and sea.

Muslim troops arrived later and blockaded the Crusaders by land. Salah Ad-Din set up his tent on a hill known as Tal Kisan. Skirmishes and confrontations continued and escalated between the two sides. Salah Ad-Din sent some soldiers to the edges of his own kingdom to urge the people to participate in jihad, while Europe, which had become bored when they were told of the occupation of Jerusalem, sent provisions to the Crusaders.

While the Crusaders blockaded Acre, European kings prepared the Third Crusade, especially after they had suffered numerous defeats. The Third Crusade was distinguished by the great kings who headed it: the German Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, the French King Philip Augustus, and the English King Richard the Lion-Hearted.

German Campaign

The German Emperor and his army, which numbered one hundred thousand soldiers, marched through Hungary to Constantinople. This army terrified the Byzantine Emperor Isaac II, who refused to help or guide them. The Byzantine Emperor informed Salah Ad-Din of the Germans' coming and that he had not

helped them. The German troops passed across Asia Minor. While in the mountains of Armenia, the emperor drowned in the Salif River. Thereupon, the German army fell into disarray and dispersed. Some went back to Germany while others embarked on ships to Acre and Tyre led by the late emperor's son Frederick. The son also died, and only a small number of the German army reached Acre. If they had reached it in full, the encounter would have been severe between the two sides.

French and English Armies

The French and English armies met in Sicily, where they remained for a long time due to disagreements between the two armies, while the Crusaders in Acre awaited them. At last the French troops left Sicily, and, ten days later, the English followed them. The Crusaders in Acre rejoiced at the arrival of the French troops to aid them.

The English King Richard was hit by a storm that blew him to Cyprus, which was controlled by the Byzantine Empire. Richard the Lion-Hearted fought with the Byzantines and was able to occupy Cyprus, where he settled for a while. He then sailed to Acre

when the King of Jerusalem, who had been released from captivity by Salah Ad-Din, asked his help.

Muslim Resistance

Undoubtedly, the strength of the Crusaders increased when the English troops joined them. Although he made numerous attempts to save the Muslims in Acre, Salah Ad-Din failed to release them. The situation became impossible for the besieged Muslims, and they were forced to surrender.

On Friday, 17 Jumada Ath-Thaniyah 587 A.H. (1191 C.E.), while Salah Ad-Din consulted with his leaders about the blockaded people, the Crusaders occupied Acre and raised their banners above its walls. The Muslims were afraid, while the Crusaders rejoiced. Cruel deeds were repeated in Acre. The Crusaders tortured and slaughtered Acre's people. They ignored the good treatment Salah Ad-Din had shown them earlier and did not keep their covenants or obligations. Pool stated that the English King Richard the Lion-Hearted killed twenty-seven hundred Muslims before the Muslim and Crusader camps on 23 Rajab 587 A.H. (16 August 1191). My reader, return to Pool's writings to know the exact cruelty the Crusaders committed in

Acre. He stated that the Crusaders killed sixty thousand Muslims in Acre and left none but those who owned much wealth in order to confiscate it. As usual, when the Crusaders occupied Acre, they indulged in pleasures. Mishud stated that the victorious Crusaders enjoyed unprecedented relaxation in Acre since their arrival in the Levant. The joys of peace, plentiful food, and women who came from the neighboring islands made them forget the task they had come for.

After the Crusaders' triumph in Acre, their tremendous armies and power, and the support of Europe, Latin states in Asia, and others who were fighting against Salah Ad-Din, it was expected that they would fight the Muslims and regain what they had lost. However, in a war that lasted for two years, they could not regain any but one city. Salah Ad-Din's army remained resistant, although he lost a few of his troops.

Among the reasons that impeded the Crusaders in their attempt to conquer other cities was the severity of the discord between the English and French kings in Sicily. Another and even severer discord was between the fugitive King of Jerusalem and Marquis Conrad Monte, ruler of Tyre. The English King inclined more to the King of Jerusalem, while the French king

inclined more to Tyre's ruler, who was aspiring to be king over Jerusalem. After they had conquered Acre, disagreements broke out again. Finally, they agreed that the King of Jerusalem would remain king until death and would be succeeded by Conrad Monte. The French King then suddenly returned to France, while the English King Richard was led by arrogance to more crimes. He wanted to regain the cities conquered by Salah Ad-Din. Many encounters took place between the two sides, the greatest of which was in Arsuf, in which the Crusaders overcame the Muslims. They regarded it as retaliation for the Battle of Hattin.

End of War

Confrontations continued between the two sides. The Crusaders came close to Jerusalem several times, once within two leagues of it. However, the English King could not blockade Jerusalem because he thought there was a plot against him, and the defenders of Jerusalem in this war were different from the previous ones. The results of encounters between the two sides came to a draw. The Crusaders could not occupy Jerusalem or any additional cities. Salah Ad-Din could not overthrow them on the coast or defeat them by driving them into the sea. Therefore, the two sides

wanted to negotiate, but they differed in the articles of the agreement. At last, they agreed to reconcile in Ramlah in Sha'ban 588 A.H. (1192 C.E.). The most important terms of the agreement were:

- The Crusaders would remain on the coastline from Tyre to Haifa.
- Christians were permitted to visit Jerusalem without paying a tax.
- The period of truce would be three years and eight months.

The coastal area in which the Franks dwelled was regarded as an extension of the previous Kingdom of Jerusalem. Acre became the capital of the Kingdom of New Jerusalem.

Richard the Lion-Hearted, who became the most famous figure in the Third Crusade, left Acre to England after signing the truce.

Thus, the Third Crusade-in which many people were killed, cities were destroyed, the German Emperor was drowned, and France and England lost elite soldiers-ended after five years. During those years, the Franks achieved nothing but the occupation of Acre. Europe was the loser because their losses were much greater

than their gains. The Muslims did not have even a span in Palestine before the advent of Salah Ad-Din. Now, after the Battle of Hattin and the Treaty of Ramlah, Palestine came under Muslim control save the narrow part between Tyre and Acre.

Thereby, Salah Ad-Din became one of the most powerful figures because he made princes submit to him, expelled Crusaders, regained Jerusalem, restored Islam's glory and power, and established a kingdom that included North Iraq (Kurdistan), most of the Levant, Greater Syria, Egypt, Palestine, Yemen, and Barqah. He achieved all this in a short time.

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Salah Ad-Din's End

1. There is historical evidence that Salah Ad-Din did not resort to reconciliation and treaty voluntarily. He was compelled by the boredom and disobedience of his soldiers. Salah Ad-Din wanted to continue the jihad in order to make the word of Allah supreme and to purify Palestine and the Syrian cities. He was afraid that the Crusaders were causing disorder and corruption in the cities they ruled. Also, he was afraid that they would unite again and attack the Muslim world and dominate it.

   Al-Qadi Ibn Shaddad stated in his book *An-Nawadir As-Sultaniyah* :

   By Allah! Reconciliation was not what he desired. He told me in a conversation concerning reconciliation, "I do not want to reconcile with them because they might unite again and encounter us in order to regain their cities, and every one of them would take a city and rule it."

   Nevertheless, the two sides accepted the Treaty of Ramlah after long and ruinous wars that destroyed everything. The result of war was dissatisfactory for

both sides. They longed for stability and calmness in order to complete their cultural progress and construction activity. In his book As-*Suluq*, Al-Maqrizi described the magnitude of joy the Crusaders and Muslims felt after the declaration of the treaty: "The day of the treaty was a memorable day, as joy prevailed on the two sides after a long time of war."

Whatever the case, Salah Ad-Din declared, "The treaty has gone into effect. So, whoever wills to enter our cities from theirs should do so. Whoever wills to enter their cities from ours should do so." After the declaration of peace, trade and economic activity began to flourish and Muslims went to Yaffa seeking provisions and trade. The situation in Palestine returned to normal and people were happy to have safety and stability.

In addition, the sultan opened the door wide for Christians to visit Jerusalem. When the English King Richard the Lion-Hearted knew of the large numbers of Christian visitors, he was afraid that Salah Ad-Din would be annoyed. So, he asked the sultan to reduce the number of visitors and suggested that Christian pilgrims not be permitted to visit save with Richard's permission. But Salah

Ad-Din rejected that and declared, "Those visitors come from distant cities to visit the holy place, so I have no right to prevent them." He was also very generous to Christian visitors and provided them with food and talked with them.

Salah Ad-Din taught Western and Eastern kings lessons about tolerance, forgiveness, good treatment and moral deeds. This all took place before the departure of Richard the Lion-Hearted to England.

May Almighty Allah have mercy on Salah Ad-Din and raise him to the highest ranks of Paradise.

2. After the Treaty of Ramlah, Salah Ad-Din went to Jerusalem to investigate its condition, reorganize its affairs, open schools, set up a hospital, and arrange the administration. He wanted to perform Hajj, but the princes advised him not to go lest the Crusaders kill him.

He accepted their advice and went to the coastline to inspect the castles and forts and rebuild what the Crusaders had destroyed. He marched from Jerusalem to Nablus, Bisan, Tiberias, Beirut, and Damascus on 26 Shawwal. People welcomed him and closed their shops to receive him. That was not strange, for he protected their country, spread justice, and eliminated sedition and rebellions.

After arriving in Damascus, he started to reorganize the state's affairs, distribute wealth to the deserving people, permit soldiers to visit their countries, and listened to people's complaints to mete justice. Damascus was a pleasant and comfortable place where he practiced hunting with his brother Al-'Adil and his children. He found refreshment after severe exhaustion of late nights and long days of fatigue. Al-Qadi Ibn Shaddad stated that Salah Ad-Din's happiness in Damascus made him forget the idea of living in Egypt. He recalled Ibn Shaddad to live with him in Damascus. Ibn Shaddad stated, "When I entered his room, he welcomed me, embraced me and wept. May Allah have mercy on him."

He remained so till 14 Safar 589 A.H., when he went out to receive the pilgrims returning from Makkah. He was moved when he met pilgrims, as he hoped to be one of them. But it was not written for him.

3. After returning from seeing the pilgrims, he was

struck down with yellow fever. The illness worsened till the doctors despaired of curing him. When his illness was announced, the people became afraid and sorrowful.

Many people gathered around Damascus's Citadel to inquire about his health while others prayed

Allah to cure him. Only Al-Qadi Ibn Shaddad and Al-Qadi Al-Fadl were permitted to visit him, and they remained with him throughout his illness.

On the sixth day, Al-Qadi Ibn Shaddad was present when servants brought the sultan cold water to drink after taking medicine, but he felt it was very hot. When they brought other water, he complained of cold and said, "Extolled be Allah, none can alter water!" He was not angry. Ibn Shaddad added, "Al-Qadi Al-Fadl and I went out and wept." Al-Qadi Al-Fadl said, "We will never see the like of those noble morals. By Allah, if such a thing took place with another king, he would strike the servant with the cup."

Al-Qadi Ibn Shaddad stated:

> On the tenth day of his illness, he was injected twice, by which he somewhat improved and drank barley water. The people were very happy that day. When we were told that his legs started to sweat, we thanked Allah a lot. When we were told also that sweat spread over his body, we were pleased. On the eleventh day, 26 Safar, when we asked about his health, we were told that he was sweating profusely until it dampened the bed and then the mat and floor. The doctors could do

nothing for him.

When Al-Malik Al-Afdal Nur Ad-Din 'Ali, Salah Ad-Din's eldest son, ascertained that there was no hope of recovery and that his father was suffering the agony of death, he made the people swear that the rule would remain with his father while he yet lived and that it would go to him (Nur Ad-Din) after his father's death. The text of the oath by which he swore, as Al-Qadi Ibn Shaddad reported in *An-Nawadir As-Sultaniyah*, was as follows:

> Now my will is sincere. I will be loyal to the king during his life. I will defend his state and spend my wealth and time for that sake. My sword and soldiers are at his disposal. Then his son Al-Afdal Nur Ad-Din 'Ali will be his successor and heir. By Allah, I will obey him, defend the state with my self, wealth and sword, and carry out his orders and prohibitions. My inner self and outward appearance are equal. Allah is the Best Witness.

4. During the night of Wednesday, 27 Safar, which was the twelfth day of his illness, Salah Ad-Din's health declined more and he fell into a coma. A reciter was brought to read some verses of the Qur'an. When the reciter reached the words meaning ﴿ ***there is no god but He, in Him is my trust*** ﴾, Salah Ad-Din's

face radiated and brightened. Then his soul returned to its Creator after the Subh *(Fajr)* Prayer on 27 Safar 589 A.H.

5. Salah Ad-Din's death was a great shock for all the Muslims. Al-Qadi Ibn Shaddad was an eyewitness and described the people's sadness:

It was a day of sadness. Muslims had not been afflicted by such a shock since the fourth Rightly-Guided Caliph's death. Gloom and melancholy prevailed in the citadel, the nation, and the world on that day. By Allah, I heard some people hoped to sacrifice themselves for him. I did not hear anything like that serious sacrifice before. I felt that if that sacrifice were accepted, he would be saved. His sons went out and cried in the streets, people were horrified by the scene. This state went on until after the Zhuhr Prayer. He was buried (may Allah honor his soul and light his grave) before the '*Asr* Prayer. His son Al-Malik Azh-Zhafir started to take patience from the people who were so grief-stricken with sorrow.

6. He was escorted to his final resting-place before the '*Asr* Prayer in a coffin enshrouded with clothes brought by Al-Qadi Al-Fadl. When people saw the coffin, they wept profusely and lamentations spread

over the site till one imagined that there was one voice. He was buried (may Allah be merciful to him) in the Citadel of Damascus. Three years later, his son Al-Malik Al-Fadl bought a house next to Al-Umawai Mosque owned by a righteous man and prepared it as a tomb. He transferred his mortal remains to it on 'Ashura' Day (10 Muharram) with a large assembly of officials and sat in mourning in Al-Umawai Mosque for three days.

The day Salah Ad-Din died, the Muslim nation lost one of the greatest figures in history, one who has a high status, respect, and glory in people's hearts. How seldom do mothers give birth to such a one as Salah Ad-Din with his character and attributes: noble, sacrificing, righteous, and a fighter. May Allah honor him in the Hereafter, lighten his grave, and raise his rank in Paradise.

7. Salah Ad-Din (may Allah have mercy on him) was fifty-seven years old at his death. His estate was forty-seven dirhams and one dinar. He left no land, no garden, no farm, nor any property.

8. After his death, numerous poets elegized him. They praised his noble attributes, such as the magnanimity that made people love him, and made him an example for generations and a symbol for defending Muslim

holy places and regaining the occupied territories. Among these poems is one by ‘Imad Al-Asbahani:

> Divisions dominated the kingdom, time became bad as its good things went away.
>
> Where is he whom we obeyed-and to Allah is his obedience?
>
> By Allah, where is An-Nasir Al-Malik who has good will and dedicated his actions for the sake of Allah?
>
> Where is he whose leadership over us is still hoped for and his authority is feared?
>
> Where is he whose graces honored time and whose favors gifted nobles?
>
> Where is he whose bravery frightened and humiliated Crusaders?
>
> He suffered hardships for the sake of jihad and rejected worldly pleasures.
>
> Do not think that one person died; rather, all people died at that time.
>
> He always supported Islam in order to occupy a high rank in Paradise.
>
> He was king and advocate for Islam.

He used to be kind, merciful and charitable to orphans and widows.

The fortified borderline cities became without brave soldiers, and jihad became no longer like your jihad.

O gloom of Islam, fear filled every believer's heart.

His era lasted for a short time, as years passed as if hours.

May Allah be pleased with him. Praise be to the Lord of the Throne.

- 9 -

Reasons for Victory over the Crusaders

We mentioned previously that Salah Ad-Din defeated the Crusaders in the decisive Battle of Hattin. The result of victory was the liberation of Jerusalem from the rancorous Crusaders after they had ravaged, oppressed and corrupted it for nearly one hundred years. History recorded their defeat and the thousands of killed, captured and injured fighters.

There were reasons for and groundwork to this victory. We will study the important reasons and groundwork that played a vital role in this success. We should not forget that the real reason for triumph was not a result of tactics or plans; rather, it was a result of following the way of the Prophet ﷺ at the Battles of Badr and Ahzab and at the opening of Makkah. And it was the result of following the way of the noble Companions at the Battles of Qadisiyah and Yarmuk. So, it goes without saying that Salah Ad-Din triumphed. It was natural that Allah enabled him to drive out the enemies because he followed the ways and approaches

of the Prophet ﷺ and the Companions. Almighty Allah declares:

﴿ وَلَيَنصُرَنَّ ٱللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُۥٓ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ۝٤٠ ٱلَّذِينَ إِن مَّكَّنَّٰهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ أَقَامُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُاْ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَأَمَرُواْ بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِ وَنَهَوۡاْ عَنِ ٱلۡمُنكَرِۗ وَلِلَّهِ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلۡأُمُورِ ﴾ .

﴿ Verily, Allah will help those who help His (Cause). Truly, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty. Those (Muslim rulers) who, if We give them power in the land, (they) order for Iqmat-as-Salt [i.e. to offer prayers perfectly-the five compulsory congregational prayers)], to pay the Zakat, and they enjoin Al-Mar'f (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do), and forbid Al-Munkar (i.e., disbelief, polytheism and all that Islam has forbidden). And with Allah rests the end of (all) matters (of creatures) ﴾. (Al-Hajj 22:40 - 41)

When the Muslim *ummah* in every time and place follows the guidance and meaning of this verse, prepares the means of victory, and strives truthfully to achieve it, Allah will surely aid them and make them achieve their aims of victory, honor, glory, and superiority. Allah the Almighty declares:

﴿ وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مِنكُمۡ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَيَسۡتَخۡلِفَنَّهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ كَمَا ٱسۡتَخۡلَفَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِهِمۡ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمۡ دِينَهُمُ ٱلَّذِي ٱرۡتَضَىٰ لَهُمۡ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّنۢ

بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا ﴾ .

﴿ Allah has promised those among you who believe, and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers) in the earth, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practise their religion, that which He has chosen for them (i.e. Islam). And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (believers) worship Me and do not associate anything (in worship) with me ﴾. (An-Nur 24:55)

The secret of and reasons for this triumph are these:

Fear of Allah and Avoiding the Prohibited

Piety and fear of Allah, good belief in Allah, seeking protection with Him, avoiding the prohibited and carrying out His orders were the first steps to victory and signs of good news. For if the spiritual power is deeply rooted in the army's hearts, it increases their strength and removes their weaknesses and defects. Moreover, Almighty Allah will not abandon the truthful army that depends on Him and enforces His orders. In addition, if Muslim soldiers need financial support and earthly means, Allah will provide them with heavenly soldiers, cast terror into their enemy's

hearts, and bring them victory from where they do not expect it. Almighty Allah declares:

﴿ إِذْ يُوحِي رَبُّكَ إِلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ أَنِّي مَعَكُمْ فَثَبِّتُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا سَأُلْقِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ فَاضْرِبُوا فَوْقَ الْأَعْنَاقِ وَاضْرِبُوا مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ ﴿١٢﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَاقُّوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَمَن يُشَاقِقِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴾

﴾ ***(Remember) when your Lord inspired the angels, Verily, I am with you, so keep firm those who have believed. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who have disbelieved, so strike them over the necks, and smite over all their fingers and toes." This is because they defied and disobeyed Allah and His Messenger. And whoever defies and disobeys Allah and His Messenger, then verily, Allah is Severe in punishment*** ﴿. (Al-Anfal 8:12-13) .

He also declares:

﴿ وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ بِهِ قُلُوبُكُمْ
وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴾ .

﴾***Allah made it only as glad tidings, and that your hearts be at rest therewith. And there is no victory except by the help of Allah. Verily, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise*** ﴿ . (Al-Anfal 8:10)

Salah Ad-Din was very careful to avoid the prohibited and restrain abominations. After becoming the vizier of Egypt, he prevented all aspects of manifest

dissipation and shamelessness. These aspects were conspicuous in Egyptian society especially during festivals and feasts, such as the Nairuz Feast in the Fatamid era. Al-Maqrizi stated in his book, *Khutut,* that evil deeds were openly performed and abominations were common on this feast. On that day, the "Nairuz Prince" rode accompanied by a lot of people. He collected a tax imposed upon the nobles on that day. Dissolute men and women gathered under the Pearl Palace, watched by the Fatimid Caliph. Voices were loud, wine was drunk in the streets, and water and wine were sprinkled on the people. If a respectful man went out of his house, his clothes would be sprinkled and dirtied.

As for piety and ritual deeds, Al-Qadi Baha' Ad-Din wrote about the religious side of Salah Ad-Din's life:

> He, may Allah have mercy on him, was of a humble heart, tearful. When the Qur'an was recited, he listened carefully and wept. He always dignified the religious rituals. He hated philosophers and those of the heretical Mu'attil sect and deviants from Islamic Law. When he heard of any heretical deviant in his kingdom, he ordered him to be killed.
>
> He supported monotheism and fought against

heretics. He used to pray the five daily prayers in their fixed time. He was always accompanied by a private imam who led him in prayer the whole day. If the imam was absent, a righteous man would lead him in prayer. He also used to pray the Sunnah prayers. He was also accustomed to praying a number of rak'ahs in the last part of the night, and if he did not wake up, he would pray them before the Subh (Fajr) Prayer.

In his book Ar-*Rawdatain fi Akhbar Ad-Dawlatain,* Abu Shamah stated that he saw him offering prayer during his final illness. He stopped only in the last three days when his mental capacity disappeared. If the time of the prayer came while he was traveling, he stopped and prayed.

He recommended his children and the governors whom he appointed to be righteous, pious, obedient to Allah's orders, protectors of people's rights, and just. Pool reported from Muslim historians that he once said to his son Azh-Zhahir:

> I recommend you to fear Allah, because it is the key to every good thing, and to enforce Allah's orders, because it is the way to salvation. Be wary of spilling blood, as blood does not rest. I recommend you to

> protect and care for your subjects' affairs, as you are my guardian and Allah's guardian over them.

Those were Salah Ad-Din's attributes and characteristics! Is it logical or reasonable for Allah to abandon him in the worst conditions or leave him in the most difficult situation?

Al-Qadi Ibn Shaddad reported:

> When he was told that the enemy had defeated the Muslims, he prostrated and prayed, "O Allah, my worldly means have been exhausted, so I have failed to achieve victory for Your religion. Nothing remains but Your aid, holding fast to Your rope, and depending on Your grace. You are sufficient for me, as You are the best trustee." I saw him weeping so much in prayer that his tears fell on his beard, then on the carpet. I could not hear what he said. On this day he was told that Muslims had triumphed over their enemies. He used to fight on Friday in order to get the blessings of the supplications of the ones giving the sermons in the mosques, for maybe their prayers would be answered.

He followed the course of the Rightly Guided Caliphs before him when they ordered their soldiers

to fear Allah, the armies to avoid the prohibited, and the *ummah* to follow Islamic teachings. For instance, 'Umar ibn Al-Khattab wrote to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas when he went to conquer Persia:

> I command you to fear Allah whatever the case may be, as fear of Allah is the best preparation for the enemy and the strongest device in war. I order you and those who are with you to avoid disobedience and committing the prohibited, as committing the prohibited is the key to the enemy's mastery over us. Muslims triumphed by obedience and submission to Allah and their enemies' disobedience to Allah. Obedience to Allah is our strength, as they are more than us in number and preparation. So, if we become equal in committing sins, they will overcome us by their strength. You should realize that the angels record your actions, both bad and good, so you should feel shy. Do not say, "Our enemy is more disobedient than us, so Allah's wrath will not afflict us, even if we are wrong." Allah may give others mastery over you, as He did with the Children of Israel. When they committed the prohibited, He gave the Magians power over them. Ask Allah to help you and give you triumph over your enemies. I ask Him that, for you and me.

To sum up, the Muslim *ummah* cannot overcome its enemy save by fear of Allah, trusting in Him, seeking shelter and protection with Allah, applying His Law, following His orders and avoiding His prohibitions. This is the way to victory, perpetuity, and life.

Full Preparation and Extensive Concern

Historians agree that Salah Ad-Din was very interested in liberating Jerusalem. His companion Al-Qadi Baha' Ad-Din described Salah Ad-Din's condition when he urged the Muslims to fight and called them to jihad against the Crusaders:

> The occupation of Jerusalem was a great matter that a mountain could not bear.... He was like a mother who is bereaved of her child. He rode from one place to another urging the people to jihad and wandered about places crying, "Oh for Islamʌʌ" and his eyes shed tears. The more he looked at Acre and the trials that afflicted the people, the more he urged the people to jihad. At that time, he ate nothing. He drank medicine given by the doctor. I was told by some of his doctors that from Friday until Sunday he ate only an insignificant amount because he was so interested in the war.

Because of his jihad and desire to make Allah's word

supreme, he left his children and wife for a long time in order to liberate Jerusalem from the claws of the wicked Crusaders and cruel invaders.

His interest in military and financial preparations was equal to his interest in spiritual and moral preparations. For example, he set up a department for the army whose members moved from camp to camp in order to oversee the safety of the horses, the number of soldiers, the working condition of weapons, the soldiers' clothing, and their conditions. He was also concerned with the weapons industry, building ships and manufacturing explosives, mines, mangonels, and other military tools.

He was also interested in the navy, so he set up a special department to manage its revenues and their application, and to oversee fleet affairs. The head of the fleet was known as the Emir of the Sea or the Emir of the Water.[1]

After this great interest and full preparations, he attacked his enemies with steadfast faith and truthful will and drove them out. This was the reason for defeating the enemy and regaining the dignity and honor of Islam.

(1) Prof. Jamal Ad-Din Ar-Ramadi, *Salah Ad-Din*, p. 57.

Political Unity of Muslim Countries

We mentioned previously that after the death of the Fatimid Caliph in 567 A.H., Salah Ad-Din ruled over Egypt. He expanded his kingdom by conquering southern Egypt (Nubia), Yemen, and Hejaz. The Red Sea and its surroundings came under his control. We also mentioned that when Nur Ad-Din, the ruler of Syrian cities, died, disorder and divisions broke out in Syria. So, Salah Ad-Din joined Damascus, Aleppo and other cities to his kingdom, thereby establishing a united Muslim nation that included northern Iraq, Kurdistan, Greater Syria, Yemen, Egypt, Barqah, and others.

Undoubtedly, the establishment of this union and the strengthening of its foundations played a vital role in liberating Jerusalem from the hands of the Crusaders after a century of occupation. Certainly, when the Muslim countries are united Islamicly and politically and are led by a believing leader, an experienced hero, a brave and trained ruler, and a truthful prince, victory will be achieved and the banner of Islam will be raised in all the Muslim lands.

The champion Salah Ad-Din could do all that and liberate Al-Aqsa Mosque-the first qiblah for Muslims,

the third mosque in rank after the two holy mosques in Arabia, the birthplace of Jesus (peace be upon him), and the place from which the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ ascended to the seven heavens–from the wicked infidels and Crusaders.

Aiming to Make Allah's Word Supreme

According to Islamic Law, before going to war, a fighter should intend to fight for Allah's sake only, not for the sake of spoils, reputation, zealotry, or hypocrisy. Almighty Allah says:

﴿ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ يُقَـٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يُقَـٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱلطَّـٰغُوتِ ﴾ .

﴿ ***Those who believe, fight in the Cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve, fight in the cause of Taghut (Satan, etc.)*** ﴾ . (An-Nisa' 4:76)

Also, the Prophet ﷺ was asked about a man who fights because he is brave, or zealous, or a hypocrite. Which one fights for the sake of Allah? The Prophet ﷺ replied, "The one who fights for making the word of Allah supreme is the one who fights for the sake of Allah." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Based on this purpose to make the word of Allah supreme, Salah Ad-Din waged wars against the

Crusaders. Al-Qadi Baha' Ad-Din ibn Shaddad recorded in his book *An-Nawadir As-Sultaniyah* a story that assures that Salah Ad-Din fought in the cause of Allah and to make the word of Allah supreme. He wrote:

> I relate what I heard from him. In Dhul-Qa'dah 584 A.H., he gave a leave to the Egyptian soldiers. The Egyptian soldiers under his brother Al-Malik Al-'Adil returned to their country. Salah Ad-Din accompanied him to see them off after the 'Eid Prayer in Jerusalem. It happened that he went to Ascalon and saw him off from there. He intended to return through the coast to inspect the coastal cities, then to Acre to arrange affairs there. His companions advised him not to do so because the Crusaders might resist them in Tyre after the departure of the Egyptian soldiers. It was a great risk. He did not care for that and saw off his brother and soldiers in Ascalon. Then we marched through the coast to Acre. It was winter and the sea was very rough with waves like mountains. While I was contemplating that landscape, he looked at me and said, "I would like to tell you something. If Allah aids me to conquer the remaining parts of this coast, I will divide the cities (to be ruled by my sons), make

my will, take leave of you, and sail to follow the Crusaders in the islands so as to eliminate all the disbelievers or to die as a martyr."

These words made me happy. I said to Salah Ad-Din, "You should not risk yourself and the soldiers, for soldiers are the protectors of Islam." Salah Ad-Din replied, "I ask you for a legal opinion. Which of the two deaths is the more honorable?" I replied, "To die in the cause of Allah." He said, "My purpose is to die for the cause of Allah."

What a pure purpose it is! What a brave and bold self it is! May the mercy of Allah be upon him. O Allah, You know that he did his best to achieve victory for Your religion. He also fought for the sake of Your mercy. O Allah, grant him Your mercy.

We mentioned previously that he always asked Allah's help in the battlefield. He prayed, "O Allah, my worldly means to support Your religion have been exhausted, so nothing remains but Your aid, holding fast to Your rope, and depending on Your grace. You are sufficient for me, as You are the best trustee."

Other evidence that confirms that he fought to make the word of Allah supreme was his noble attitudes and treatment of his enemies. All historians, Western and

Eastern, Orienalists and Muslims, recorded these attitudes and deeds. Among them were his distributing money and riding animals to the aged, poor, and ill of the Crusaders, and his accepting ransom to release captives. In addition, other deeds will be mentioned in the next chapter.

Hatti stated in this respect, "The difference between the treatment of Muslims to civilian Crusaders and Crusaders to civilian Muslims eighty-eight years previous was very obvious." We mentioned earlier a lot about his good and noble treatment of women, children, the aged, and the captive Crusaders in the section "Salah Ad-Din's Treatment of the Crusaders".

Liberation the Issue of Islam and Muslims

According to Islamic Law, if the Muslims' land is occupied, all Muslims must unite to liberate the occupied land from the claws of enemies and disbelievers. If they neglect to do so, divine and historical responsibility will fall upon the whole Muslim *ummah* from West to East. Almighty Allah declares:

﴿ إِلَّا تَنفِرُوا يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا وَيَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ وَلَا تَضُرُّوهُ شَيْئًا ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴾ .

﴾ If you march not forth, He will punish you with

apainful torment and will replace you by another people, and you cannot harm Him at all, and Allah is Able to do all things ﴾. (At-Taubah 9:39)

﴿ انفِرُوا خِفَافًا وَثِقَالًا وَجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾ .

﴾***March forth, whether you are light (being healthy, young and wealthy) or heavy (being ill, old and poor), strive hard with your wealth and your lives in the Cause of Allah. This is better for you, if you but knew*** ﴾. (At-Taubah 9:41)

Based on this principle, Salah Ad-Din gathered all the Muslims of various races and languages under the banner of Islamic unity in order to stop the wicked Crusaders who cruelly profaned Jerusalem, which is the birthplace of Jesus (peace be upon him) and the place from which the Prophet ﷺ ascended to the seven heavens.

why did not the Muslims attack as one man? After they had come under the banner of Islam, they were loving, merciful, and sympathetic like a whole body that aches when one limb aches because of sleeplessness and fever.

Why not? After Islam had gathered all the Muslims of different races, tongues, and colors, there was no

preference of Arab over non-Arab or of whites over blacks, only preference by one's piety.

Why not ? They are children of one belief, one religion, one Qur'an, and monotheism.

Why not? Every span in which the name of Allah is mentioned is possessed by them, every building upon which the banner of Islam flutters is theirs. A poet said:

> My only homeland is Islam,
> whether in Syria or the Nile Valley.
> The land in which the name of
> Allah is mentioned is my homeland.

Why not ? Every one of Salah Ad-Din's soldiers hoped to be martyred for the cause of Allah. A martyr in his last breath would repeat a poem saying:

> I do not care as long as I am killed in the
> fold of Islam; by any way I will be killed.
> Or he would repeat, "I hastened to You,
> my Lord," or "By the Lord of the Ka'bah,
> I have won."

Thus, every Muslim who believed in Allah as his Lord, in Islam as his religion, and in Muhammad ﷺ as his Prophet and Messenger, regardless of his race or

tongue, had joined Salah Ad-Din's army. That is because the issue for which they fought, boldly defied death, and were martyred was Islam and Muslims all over the world.

- 10 -

Palestine Yesterday and Today

While reviewing the reasons for victory over the Crusaders, we should not forget to touch on the causes of failure, disgrace, humiliation, and defeat nowadays in wars with Jews in Palestine. You can say "shameful defeat" that afflicted Muslims in the twentieth century. Defeat before whom? Before the most humiliated nation in history, before those whom Allah transformed into monkeys and pigs, before those who were afflicted by Allah's curse and wrath, before those who are well known for perfidy, cowardice, betrayal, meanness, lowness, and cunning throughout history.

We mentioned in the previous chapter the secret behind the Muslims' victory. We will study in this chapter the reasons for failure and defeat that afflicted the Muslim nation in its war against the Jews from 1948 C.E. until the publishing of this book.[1] The reasons for failure, in my viewpoint, are the following points:

1- Decline in the Moral and Spiritual Side

Among the reasons for victory in the Battle of Hattin was the elevation of the moral and spiritual

(1) This book was first published in 1974 by Dar Al-Salam, Cairo.

side of Muslims. In contrast, the reason for defeat in wars against Jews nowadays is the decline of the spiritual and moral side of Muslims, which has disintegrated all sections of the *ummah* and has affected all the armies that took part in the war and struggled in the battles of jihad. We heard that some soldiers in the front lines drank alcohol and others enjoyed whores while the enemies monitored them and saw their spiritual decline and moral dissolution.

We heard also that radio stations broadcast cries to stimulate the warriors such as, "Strike and kill the enemy ! Artists support you ! The singer so-and-so is with you ! The actress so-and-so is beside you ! " But as for Allah, fear of Him, and asking for divine help, none of that was taken into account.

We heard also that before the war, some Arab leaders distributed thousands of photos of artists, singers, and actresses to the soldiers stationed in the front line, encouraging their dissolution and increasing their decline.

We also heard that official magazines were distributed among the warriors a month before the 1967 war. They impudently and shamelessly called to disbelief and polytheism to the extent that an

atheist journalist wrote an article in an official magazine under the title "The Way to Shape a New Arab Man". He wrote:

> The Arab world asked for Allah's help... searched for original values in Islam and Christianity... asked assistance of feudal and capitalistic systems and other well-known systems in the Medieval Ages. However, this was in vain.... The only way to set up a civilization for the Arab is to establish a new socialist system in the Arab man.

The man whom the journalist wants is, "... the one who believes that Allah, religions, feudalism, capitalism, colonialism, and other values that were common in previous societies are just mummified puppets in history museums."

It was so sad that the magazine Al-Mu'alim Al-'Arabi published a poem by an atheist poet who sold his religion, honor, and conscience to Satan.(1) He declared barefaced atheism, wanton licentiousness, and misguiding principles in his poem. He wrote:

It walked with no feet, no road .

It is Palestine for which I sing .

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(1) Salih 'Adimah, "*Nashid Al-'Arusah Ad-da'ah*" ("Song of the Missing Bride"), Al-Mu'alim Al-'Arabi, issue no. 5, Oct. 1965, p. 54.

It asks people whether they prayed or
worshiped. I hated those people and
their worship.
Prayer is not useful to them, because
Allah died along with the idols.
If they were afflicted with problems,
they would ask the help of the Unseen.
Those who ask the help of the Unseen
are weaker; stronger are those who
fight bravely.

Then he added:

Those people alleged patience and excuse,
so I disbelieve in the Lord of patience.

The remarkable thing about the matter is that the magazine's editor alleged that it is the only educational magazine and it was established in order to implant the seeds of faith, morals and knowledge in teachers and students. However, it published such a poem that showed hatred, wickedness, and malice for the beliefs of the *ummah* and the messages of the Prophet ﷺ ! Is it reasonable for fighters in such condition to triumph over their enemies? Is it reasonable that Allah would

help them?

Is not their condition like that of Abu Jahl (the curse of Allah be upon him) when Abu Sufyan sent him to return with his army and informed him that his caravan was safe? However, he was stubborn and said, "By Allah, we will not return until we arrive in Badr and stay there three days, sharing food, slaughtering sacrifices, drinking wine, playing music, and the Arabs praising our actions."

Did not ‘Umar ibn Al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) describe the obvious way to achieve victory and overcome the enemy? Did he not order his army's commander, Sa‘d ibn Abi Waqqas, when he was going to conquer Persia:

> I command you to fear Allah whatever the case may be, as fear of Allah is the best preparation for the enemy and the strongest device in war. I order you and those who are with you to avoid disobedience and committing the prohibited, as committing the prohibited is the key to the enemy's mastery over us. Muslims triumphed by obedience and submission to Allah and their enemies' disobedience to Allah. Obedience to Allah is our strength, as they are more than us in number and preparation. So, if we

become equal in committing sins, they will overcome us by their strength.

This is concerning committing sins and prohibitions. What about those who deny the existence of Allah and openly call to atheism and deny the principles of religion and morals?

This important fact should be realized by the Muslim *ummah* in general and Arab nations in particular if they want to attain honor and triumph. Almighty Allah says:

﴿ وَلَيَنصُرَنَّ ٱللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُۥٓ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَقَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴾ .

﴿***Verily, Allah will help those who help His (Cause). Truly, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty***﴾. (Al-Hajj 22:40)

﴿ إِن تَنصُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ يَنصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ ﴾ .

﴿ ***If you help (in the cause of) Allah, He will help you, and make your foothold firm*** ﴾. (Muhammad 47:7)

2- Differences, Quarrels and Disputes

Among the reasons for victory in the Battle of Hattin was the political unity under one rule. In contrast, the reasons for defeat in wars with Jews are differences, quarrels and disputes.

We have heard a lot of bickering, abuses, accusations and insults among kings and heads of Muslim governments that were transmitted to all people. They exchange accusations of betrayal and agents, while their enemies attentively observe these accusations and, undoubtedly, they rejoice at these disputes, quarrels and hatred while their own financial and spiritual strength increases more and more. In addition, they urge Jews all over the world to immigrate to Palestine. They work day and night in order to carry out their plans to expand from the Nile to the Euphrates.

The differences afflicting recent Arab governments are the result of forsaking Islam. The principles of those rulers, derived from the East and West, have caused rebellion among the people and aroused the anger of the other governments that did not follow these principles, thoughts, and beliefs. The result was differences in approaches and ways, and conflicts in beliefs and thoughts. One party follows Washington, another follows London, another follows Moscow, and yet another follows Beijing. One party is called rightist, another is called leftist. Thus, the Arab Muslim *ummah* is divided into parties, sects, states and cities, rebels and governors, conservatives and progressives. So, it is

impossible to unite their word or gather them under one banner, as they have abandoned Islamic Law and rejected to follow it. The Qur'an warns us:

﴿وَأَنَّ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَٱتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟ ٱلسُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ﴾.

﴿ ***And verily, this is My Straight Path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His Path*** ﴾. (Al-An'am 6:153)

﴿وَلَا تَنَٰزَعُوا۟ فَتَفْشَلُوا۟ وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ﴾.

﴿***...and do not dispute, (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart...*** ﴾.(Al-Anfal 8:45)

Is it reasonable to triumph over the enemy with the help of Allah in these circumstances?

3- Interest in Word but Not in Deed

Among the reasons for victory in the Battle of Hattin was the full preparation and great interest in the issue of liberating Jerusalem. In contrast, the reason for defeat and failure in the face of the Jews now is that the interest in liberation is limited to words, boasting, and imposture.

Since the Palestinian issue came to existence, we have heard a lot of zealous speeches and enthusiastic words delivered before the masses in order to arouse their emotions. They navely believe their words with cheers

and applause. Thereafter, no positive actions or military preparations are taken. Allah the Most High says:

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ۝ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَن تَقُولُوا۟ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴾ .

﴿ ***O you who believe ! Why do you say that which you do not do? Most hateful it is in the Sight of Allah that you say that which you do not do*** ﴾ . (As-Saff 61:1-2)

The poet also says:

> All alleged that he has a relation with Laila;
> however, Laila rejects their allegations.

The Palestinian issue gets worse and worse. The more we solve one problem, the more we fall into another. Every day Israel increases in strength, power, preparations, and accuracy. The reason is that the Muslim *ummah* cannot carry the responsibility and is stricken by despair and desperation. We hear from time to time news about reconciliation, "Roger's Project" and others. For instance, some Arab states have adopted projects for major countries all at once. In addition, there are serious plans to eliminate Fedayeen and contest the Palestinian issue at its core. Undoubtedly, it serves Israel and will be a first plan to achieve

the expansion and imperialism they seek.

From the birth of the State of Israel till this day, most Arab rulers have neglected the Palestinian issue and have not sacrificed for it. If they were interested in it, they would close brothels, dance halls, and bars, as De Gaulle did after taking power during World War II, and they would forbid the broadcast and televising of dissolute songs, impudent dramas and insolent dance. Also, they would prepare youths religiously and morally and prevent all aspects of dissolution, effeminacy, and decadence.

Is it reasonable for the Muslims, while they have lost their concern and preparations and indulge in pleasures and dissolution, to be aided by Allah in the battle of destiny?

4- Wrong Aim of War

Among the reasons for victory in the Battle of Hattin was that Muslims were fighting to make the word of Allah supreme. In contrast, the reason for failure and defeat nowadays is that fighting is for the sake of fanaticism, party spirit, whims, Western thoughts, and novel principles that are unrelated to Islam. Some rulers have delivered speeches in which they urged

people to fight without even mentioning the name of Allah or Islam in their statements. Rather, they declared bared ignorance and unjust fanaticism in order to arouse them to fight.

In 1948, the call to fight was in the name of nationalism.

In 1956, the call to fight was in the name of nationalism.

In 1967, the call to fight was in the name of revolutionary principles.

In 1973, the call to fight was in the name of dignity, honor, challenge, and steadfastness of Arabs.

﴿ إِنْ هِىَ إِلَّآ أَسْمَآءٌ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَآ أَنتُمْ وَءَابَآؤُكُم مَّآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَا مِن سُلْطَٰنٍ ۚ إِن يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا ٱلظَّنَّ وَمَا تَهْوَى ٱلْأَنفُسُ ۖ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَهُم مِّن رَّبِّهِمُ ٱلْهُدَىٰٓ ﴾ .

﴿***They are but names which you have named,-you and your fathers-for which Allah has sent down no authority. They follow but a guess and that which they themselves desire, whereas there has surely come to them the Guidance from their Lord !*** ﴾. (An-Najm 53:23)

In addition, we have heard and read recently about atheist slogans and misguiding names. Their aim is to turn Muslims away from resistance against the enemy and from liberating the occupied territories. In

addition, some mercenary writers have been sent out-in our war against Israel-to skirmish with religion and attack the nature of Allah, Islam, and the messengers. For instance, an educated agent, Nadim Al-Bitar, wrote in his book *Min An-Naksah ila Ath-Thawrah* (From Setback to Revolution):

> The world will find salvation through rebels. Without them, our culture and civilization will be over.... Those rebels are the best of the earth and responsible for Allah because I am convinced there is no Allah now. But, we should create him.

Would we triumph through those rebels against Allah, His Laws, His messages, and His prophets? Or would we go from one setback to find other setbacks, and from one collapse to find other collapses?

Do we expect any good of them? Do they achieve victory when they rebel against Allah, noble values, and Islam? Will they be fedayeen and champions in the future?

Palestine will not be liberated by those atheist rebels.

Palestine will not be liberated by those who deny religion and disbelieve in Allah.

Palestine will not be liberated by those frivolous

criminals who follow the way of abomination and wine.

Professor Dr. Yusuf Al-Qaradawi wrote:

> I am sure that Israel will not depart and Palestine will not be liberated save by those true believers who kneel, prostrate, enjoin good and forbid evil, preserve Allah's Laws, and fight in the cause of Allah while their hearts and bodies are purified. Those are the real soldiers whom none can challenge or persist before when the caller cries, "O wind of Paradise, come to us! O victory of Allah, come quickly! O men of the Qur'an, carry out the teachings of the Qur'an! "
>
> Those are they who revolt against material thoughts, reject the language of numbers, and do not care for what the enemy has in numbers; rather, they trust in what they themselves have. Their horizons go beyond the earth to the heavens and from the world of martyrdom to the unseen world. They believe that if they lose people's support, they will gain Allah's help . ﴿ ***...and Allah is Sufficient as a Wali (Protector), and Allah is Sufficient as a Helper*** ﴾. (An-Nisa' 4:45) and Allah's soldiers are with them , ﴿***And none can know the hosts of your Lord but He***﴾ . (Al-Muddaththir 74:31). Those are the ones who will liberate Palestine from the Jews.

Their aim is only to make the Word of Allah supreme. Their title is Islam, their distinguishing mark is to worship Allah, and their cry is "*Allahu Akbar* ! Allah is the greatest ! "

The Prophet ﷺ referred to those fighters saying, ﴾*Muslims will fight against Jews before the Day of Judgment. They will triumph over them to the extent that they will hide behind trees and rocks. The rocks and trees will pronounce and call out, "O Muslim ! O servant of Allah ! This is a Jew hidden behind me; come and kill him* ﴿ (Muslim) . Those Muslims who will kill Jews and liberate Palestine are not called Jordanians, Syrians, Palestinians, or even Arabs because they forsake these names and call themselves "Muslims". The banner of those people to whom the rocks and trees will call is Islam, and their aim is to worship Allah alone. This is the real fighter of whom the *ummah* is in need, as he will destroy the Israeli kingdom and kill Jews. Allah's Messenger ﷺ foretold us that it is the Muslim whose heart is full of faith and trust in Allah and who abandons worldly pleasures for the sake of the Hereafter. He is not the "geographical" Muslim who inherited Islam as he inherited a name and surname from his parents, and for whom the word "Muslim" is only a

title on the birth certificate. The real Muslim is a slave of Allah, not a slave to appetites, women, alcohol, not a slave to the world and money, not a slave to the principles of the Jews. Such a slave cannot be victorious, nor liberate the land, nor raise the banner of our *ummah*. Rather, he achieves setbacks and losses.[1]

In 1948, the Jews tasted afflictions when a group of true Muslims called the Muslim Brothers resisted them. Although they were only two hundred fighters and had few means and were betrayed by others, they performed wonders. They went out to war intending to be martyred in the cause of Allah and searching for death. A Jew told a captured officer of the mujahidin, Ma'ruf Al-Khudari, "We do not fear any force except of those volunteers." The officer asked him what they feared from them. The Jew replied, "We have come from several lands to live in this land, but they have come to die."

During the latest 10 Ramadan War (6 October 1973, known in the United States as the Yom Kippur War), there were believing officers and Muslim soldiers in the Syrian Army who proved their bravery and heroism,

(1) Prof. Dr. Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, *Dars An-Nakbah Ath-Thaniyah*, p. 89.

caused losses to the enemy, and achieved some victories for their nation. They fought to make the word of Allah supreme, cling to noble morals, full manhood, and lofty Islamic manners.

Thus, faith in Allah, making His word supreme, sacrificing for His cause, and waging war in the name of Islam are the first step towards triumph.

Is it reasonable for Muslims in today's deteriorated conditions to have any gain from their enemy or to be aided by Allah in a decisive war?

5- Just an Arab Issue

Among the reasons for victory in the Battle of Hattin was that the issue of liberating Palestine was made an Islamic issue. In contrast, one of the reasons for failure and defeat at the present time is the return to making the Palestinian issue purely an Arab and national issue. Announcers and reporters in the mass media and the press call for Arab nationalism and declare that only Arabs are responsible for liberating Palestine and struggling against the Jews.

Do these statements not ignore the six hundred million Muslims all over the world? Do not non-Arab Muslims believe in Al-Aqsa Mosque as the third holy

mosque, the first of the two *qiblahs*, and the place from which the Prophet ﷺ ascended to the seven heavens? Yet they believe that striving in the cause of Allah is the best struggle and the noblest aim.

Fighting against the Jews in the name of nationalism and Arabism is a betrayal of Islam, Muslims, and the Palestinian issue. A betrayal of Islam because they have changed fighting in the name of Islam into fighting in the name of Arab nationalism. A betrayal of Muslims because they have changed Islamic brotherhood into Arab brotherhood. Almighty Allah says:

﴿ إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ ﴾

﴿***The believers are nothing else than brothers***﴾ . (Al-Hujarat 49:10)

﴿ إِنَّ هَٰذِهِۦٓ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً ﴾ .

﴿***Truly! This, your religion (*ummah*) is one religion***﴾ . (Al-Anbiya' 21:92)

The preceding two verses refer to the true link among Muslims, which is Islam. Islam prefers this link above any link of blood, race, color, language, or history.

Have you seen anything like that betrayal throughout Muslim history?

Have you heard anything like that betrayal and denial of Islamic brotherhood in Muslims' wars against enemies?

It was a betrayal for the Palestinian issue because the callers for fighting in the name of Arab nationalism turned non-Arab Muslims away from the issue. In addition, they made them feel unjustly that the issue was related to Arabs, not to the Muslims as a whole. Is it reasonable-after these reactions and divisions among Muslims, which were caused by those who call for fighting in the name of Arab Nationalism instead of Islam-for all Muslims to unite and fight for the sake of liberating the Holy Land?

Have Muslims known a relation other than that of Islam, faith, and the Qur'an throughout their glorious history?

The poet was truthful when he said:

A caller supports his ally in order to
make him one of the nobles in a tribe.
Surely, I have no father but Islam, while
people are proud of Qais or Tamim[1] .

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(1) Qais and Tamim were two famous tribes during the pre-Islamic period. (translator)

Sheikh Muhammad Nimr Al-Khatib stated in his book, *Al-Iman Tariquna ila An-Nasr* (Faith Is Our Way to Victory):

> Arab leaders have been persevering for a long time in making the Palestinian problem as purely an Arab issue. I do not know what the reason behind this is....
>
> I do not know why the Arabs ignore other Muslims who amount to seven hundred million and live in the best and richest land, and own the black and white gold.
>
> I do not know why they do that in spite of the fact that all nations strive to make friends with others and ask their help.
>
> What I understand from this action is that they want to satisfy the Christians who live in the Arab World. However, does this disturb our Christian citizens when we save our brothers, Jesus' birthplace, and the Church of the Resurrection in Palestine? Does this disturb them if non-Arab Muslims participate with us in liberating the Holy Land?

The cause of the separation between Islam and Arabism concerning war against the Jews is that the

world today no longer believes in or calls for war in the name of religion. Moreover, if we regard the Palestinian issue as an Islamic one, they will accuse us of backwardness and reaction. Here a question arises: Did they forget that Israel was established on religious bases? And that their propaganda abroad is in the name of Judaism?

The Jewish Wiezmann wrote in his memoirs:[1]

> I met the British Foreign Minister Lord Balfour who asked me on the spot, "Why did you not accept to establish your new state in Uganda?" I replied, "Surely, Zionism is a political and national movement; however, we cannot ignore the spiritual side. I am sure that if we ignore the spiritual side, we cannot achieve the political and national dream."

The Jewish Herzl said in the Basel Conference held in 1897, "Returning to Zionism should be preceded by returning to Judaism."

BenGurion wrote a message to President De Gaulle

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(1) For this and the following quotations from Zionist leaders, references were not included in the text and the original could not be traced. These are, therefore, retranslated from the Arabic translation. (editor)

telling him, "The secret of survival after the two defeats by the Babylonians and Romans and the enduring hatred of Christians that has encompassed us for a thousand years lies in our spiritual belief in the Holy Book."

The Jewish leaders have decreed this oath that should be taken by every Jew when he comes of age: "O Israel, this is my oath, I swear to be loyal to God, the Torah, the Jewish people, and the Jewish State."

Ben Gurion also declared in the Twenty-fifth Conference for International Zionism (25 December 1960), "Every Jew should immigrate to Israel. Every Jew who lives outside of Israel since its formation is warned that he is a transgressor of the teachings of the Torah, and that Jew disbelieves daily in Judaism."

Influences of spiritual values on Jewish people have attained the following:

- The name of the state is Israel.
- Whoever works on Saturday is stoned.
- Civil marriages are not recognized by the state.
- Restaurants that prepare non-Kosher food are closed.
- Every Jew should choose for himself a name from

the Torah.

A short time later, Neseem, the Grand Rabbi in Israel, wanted to make the Talmud the Law for Israel. Before him, the Minister of Social Affairs in the racist country attempted to acknowledge the Torah as the Law for Israel.

The last news we heard is that a large party did not vote for Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir, on the plea that Judaism decrees that women should not hold the reins of power.[1]

Is it true, or logical, or just to let our enemy occupy our land in the name of religion, and unite in the name of religion, and set up their state on religious bases, while we-the ones who invite to the Truth, the ones concerned with the matter-are embarrassed and ashamed to incorporate Islam, which is the Law of Allah, in the reckoning of battle, or to fight our enemy in the name of Islam, by which we live and in whose fold we die? And even those who are interested in the Palestinian issue confine the issue only to Arabs and ignore six hundred million non-Arab Muslims.

Is it reasonable for Muslims, while they fight in the

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(1) *Al-Hawadith* Magazine, Issue no. 587, 9 February 1968.

name of Arab nationalism, to gain anything over their enemy or to be aided by Allah in the decisive war?

This was a brief comparison of the Palestinian wars yesterday and today. Those who have a sound mind should consider it, learn from it, and follow the best way to liberate the Holy Land from the claws of the Jews and to achieve the promised triumph, if they want to have the honor for their generation and generations to come.

The only way to salvation and a return to honor is Islam, as it is the way to victory:

﴿ وَٱللَّهُ غَالِبٌ عَلَىٰٓ أَمۡرِهِۦ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكۡثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ ﴾ .

﴾***And Allah has full power and control over His Affairs, but most of men know not***﴿ . (Yusuf 12:21)

- 11 -

Salah Ad-Din's Characteristics

In the previous chapters we reviewed the stages of Salah Ad-Din's life from birth to death. It is recommendable here to review his principal characteristics - such as his worship, personal morals, and noble merits - that immortalized his name in history.

The following are the most distinguished characteristics and morals:

Piety and Worship

Undoubtedly, piety, worship, fear of Allah, good faith and trust in Him are the first and best characteristics that distinguish a Muslim. For adhering to Allah, relating to Him, and asking everything of Him motivate the Muslim to be a brave champion. This virtue, which is a kind of faith and worship, was a distinguished characteristic of Salah Ad-Din. His friend Al-Qadi Baha' Ad-Din, known as Ibn Shaddad, stated in his book *Sirat Salah Ad-Din:*

> He (may Allah have mercy on him) had good belief and remembered Allah much. He took this belief through studying with great scholars and

jurists. For example, Sheikh Qutb Ad-Din An-Naisaburi compiled for him comprehensive information and titles about the subject of belief. He took great care to teach it to his small children in order for them to memorize it. I saw him while he was teaching them it and they were reciting it to him.

As for prayer, he used to offer prayer at its fixed time and in congregation. He also regularly offered the fixed and unfixed Sunnah prayers and he used to awaken to pray during the night or would pray before the dawn prayer.... I saw him praying on his feet in his final illness. He did not stop praying except in the last three days when he lost his mental faculties. If the time of prayer came while he was traveling, he would get down to pray.

As for zakah, he died without possessing even the minimum amount of property to be liable for it. As for charity to the poor and needy, he spent his wealth on them. His legacy was forty-seven dirhams and one *jurm* (a piece the size of a date stone) of gold. He left behind no property, neither a house, nor land, nor garden, nor orchard, nor village, nor farm, nor any type of wealth.

As for fasting Ramadan, he missed some days of Ramadan because of illness. However, he started to

fast them in Jerusalem in the year in which he died. His doctor blamed him because he made up for these days, but he replied, "I do not know my destiny." It seems that he felt death near to him.

As for Hajj, he kept intending and insisting on performing it, especially in the year in which he died. However, the time was not right, as he had no money and limited time. He intended to perform it in the next year, but Allah decreed his death. All people agreed upon this.

He used to read and listen to the Holy Qur'an and chose the best reader who had to be well versed in the Qur'an. He had a submissive and humble heart and often cried. He also listened to the hadith of the Prophet ﷺ. When he was told about a highly educated Sheikh, he called him to teach him and recite what he had memorized. He permitted others to attend and listen to what he recited.

He always dignified the religious rituals. He hated philosophers and those of the heretical Mu'attil sect and deviants from Islamic Law. When he heard of any heretical deviant in his kingdom, he ordered him to be killed.

He also trusted in Allah, depended on Him, turned to Him in repentance, and submitted to

Him. When Muslims were defeated, he used to pray and supplicate Allah while prostrating saying, "O Allah, my worldly means have been exhausted, so I have failed to achieve victory for Your religion. Nothing remains but Your aid, holding fast to Your rope, and depending on Your grace. You are sufficient for me, as You are the best trustee."

Al-Qadi Baha' Ad-Din adds,

"I saw his tears falling on his beard, then on the carpet, but I could not hear what he said." It was the same day that he was told that the Muslims had been victorious.

Moreover, he loved jihad so much that it occupied all his heart, feelings and senses. He used to fight on Friday in order to get the blessings of the supplications of the ones giving the sermons in the mosques, for maybe their prayers would be answered.

Justice and Mercy

Al-Qadi Baha' Ad-Din reported:

He (may Allah be merciful to him) was just, merciful, kind, and a supporter of the weak. He used to judge among all classes of society-young, old, rich, poor, etc.-every Monday and Thursday in

a public council attended by jurists, judges and scholars. He was accustomed to doing that whether traveling or in residence. He cared for the plaintiffs and endeavored to solve their problems.

He was so just that he stood beside his adversary in court without embarrassment or pride, as justice should be followed. A trader named 'Umar Al-Khallati accused Salah Ad-Din of taking one of his slaves, called Sunqur, and unjustly taking his wealth. When the trader brought his suit against him to the judge, Al-Qadi Ibn Shaddad, Salah Ad-Din was patient and satisfied to be the defendant. The two adversaries brought their witnesses and evidence. At last, it was confirmed that the trader had accused Salah Ad-Din falsely. However, when he was able to, Salah Ad-Din gave the trader a gift and a sum of money in order to prove his generosity and forgiveness.

He also took care of the interests of his subjects and removed some of the taxes and duties imposed on them. Ibn Jubair stated that among Salah Ad-Din's virtues that will be exemplary forever was that he removed some types of taxes and duties imposed on people, including sales taxes and the duties on drinking water from the Nile.

There was a tax of seven and a half dinars imposed upon every pilgrim on his way to the Hejaz for the alterations in Makkah and Madinah and to help the people there. The Fatimids went to extremes in collecting the tax, and whoever was unable to pay it was punished severely. However, Salah Ad-Din removed these taxes from pilgrims who were poor and compensated the people of Hejaz with an equal subsidy instead. So, Allah saved those believers and pilgrims from troubles under the rule of the just Sultan Salah Ad-Din.

Courage and Perseverance

He was exemplary in bravery, as friends and foes acknowledged. This hero was not like those lieutenants, kings, and generals who sit on the throne and do nothing but issue orders to their soldiers to wage war against others. If the soldiers triumph, they will be the champions, and if they are defeated, they are safe in their headquarters. Salah Ad-Din was not like those kings and generals because he was accustomed to being in the first line of the army and sharing with the soldiers the risks and crises of war.

For example, his distinguished bravery was mani-

fested when he occupied Kawkab Fortress in 584 A.H. He permitted the Egyptian soldiers under his brother Al-Malik Al-'Adil to take a rest leave. He accompanied them to Ascalon and bid them farewell there before going to inspect the coastal cities until Acre. His advisers disagreed with him about this plan because there would not be enough bodyguards to accompany him in his visits after the Egyptian soldiers had departed. Besides, a large number of Crusaders lived in Tyre. Therefore, they and Al-Qadi Ibn Shaddad advised him not to do so and told him it was a great risk. However, he did not care and marched to Acre after the departure of the Egyptian army without fearing the enemy.

It was winter and the sea was rough. Salah Ad-Din was accompanied by Al-Qadi Ibn Shaddad. He looked at the rough waves then turned to Ibn Shaddad and said, "If Allah aids me to conquer the remaining parts of this coast, I will divide the cities (to be ruled by my sons), make my will, take leave of you, and sail to follow the Crusaders in the islands so as to eliminate all the disbelievers or to die as a martyr."

He was calm, had a strong will, and was able to endure hardships and sufferings. Al-Qadi Ibn Shaddad

related:

> During the Crusaders' blockade of Acre, more than seventy Crusader ships arrived at Acre in one night. He counted them from after 'Asr Prayer to sunset. Nevertheless, he did not feel fear, but rather, more strength....I have never seen him fearing an enemy because of his (enemy's) large number or his great power.

In a battle with the Crusaders in Acre, the Muslims were defeated and their standard fell. However, Salah Ad-Din remained steadfast with a small group and withdrew to the mountain in order to gather and encourage the soldiers to continue fighting. He kept doing so until he achieved victory.

In another incident while he was stationed in Acre, on a rainy, stormy day, Salah Ad-Din's tent fell down on him, nearly killing him. It did nothing but increase his appetite for jihad. This indicates his high moral spirits, strong trust in Allah, and unique bravery.

Al-Qadi Baha' Ad-Din elaborated on his sacrifice and love of jihad in the cause of Allah:

> He was so fond of jihad that it occupied all of his time, speech and life. He took interest only in his soldiers, ammunitions, and people who were

interested in jihad. He departed his family, sons, and homeland for jihad in the cause of Allah. He was content to live under the shade of a tent that is susceptible to wind and storm. He led the army, organized the soldiers, and fought against the enemies several times in spite of illness.

When Ibn Shaddad wondered at this, Salah Ad-Din replied, "When I start fighting, illness is removed."

The following incident, which was reported by Ibn Shaddad, also shows his patience and satisfaction. Salah Ad-Din had a son named Isma'il. When he was told that his son had died, he endured, was patient, and sacrificed him in anticipation of Allah's reward in the Hereafter. His eyes only filled with tears. Ibn Shaddad said, "Consider this patience and sacrifice, and the noble purpose. O Allah, as You inspired and guided him to patience and sacrifice, I pray You to reward him, O You, the Most Merciful." [1]

Understanding and Forgiveness

Among his noble traits were understanding and forgiveness. He always met ill treatment with good and rudeness with patience. For example, Ibn Shaddad

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(1) *An-Nawadir As-Sultaniyah*, p. 50.

reported that people crowded together so much that some of them trod on the hem of his garment or the carpet upon which he sat in order to offer their complaints. However, he took care of their complaints and fulfilled their needs and demands. Although some plaintiffs spoke rudely to him, he accepted their words.

One day, Al-Qadi Ibn Shaddad rode his mule and passed by him. It was a rainy day and the mule splattered Salah Ad-Din's clothes with mud. However, he did not permit Ibn Shaddad to retire shyly into a corner and smiled at him in order to remove his embarrassment.

Ibn Shaddad was an eyewitness to the following incident that indicates Salah Ad-Din's understanding and forgiveness. During the struggle between Salah Ad-Din and Richard the Lion-Hearted over Yaffa, some of Salah Ad-Din's soldiers disobeyed his orders and spoke rudely to him. Thereupon, he left them angrily. When other soldiers saw him, they imagined that he had killed the others because of what they had said and done. He returned to headquarters and met with the princes, each of whom felt afraid and thought that he was hated. Even Ibn Shaddad himself, despite his high status in the eyes of Salah Ad-Din, said, "I feared to enter upon him

lest he call me." But when Ibn Shaddad entered upon him, he asked him to gather the princes to eat some fruits that had just arrived from Damascus. When the princes attended, still afraid, they found Salah Ad-Din happy, which made them feel composed and safe in their hearts. They left willing to fight as if nothing had happened.

Historians also recorded that a man complained to him when he was tired. Salah Ad-Din told him to wait a little while, but the man refused to wait and read the content of the complaint to Salah Ad-Din, who listened carefully to him. After he had finished, Salah Ad-Din told him that there was no inkwell to sign his complaint. The man hastened and brought an inkwell to Salah Ad-Din. He was not angry and quietly signed the complaint.

His understanding was not limited to his followers, subjects, and soldiers, but it also applied to his enemy. We mentioned in the seventh chapter examples indicating his pardon and understanding, and you may return to it to know more.

Chivalry and Magnanimity

Historians agree that Salah Ad-Din's chivalry,

magnanimity, and good treatment of the enemy were unprecedented in the history of wars and conquests.

Prince 'Ali reported from the English historian Mill that a number of Christians who left Jerusalem went to Christian Antioch. They were not welcomed, but rather expelled, by the prince of Antioch. They headed instead to Muslim countries, which welcomed them. Prince 'Ali also adds Mishud's description of the condition of those who were expelled from Jerusalem and what they met from their Christian brethren. They suffered starvation, poverty, and lack of human respect in Syria, and Tripoli closed its gates before them. A woman was compelled to throw her child into the sea and cursed the Christian people who refused them hospitality or shelter.

Sultan Salah Ad-Din was told that the patriarch was leaving with his money and treasures without paying ransom for the Crusaders' poor and needy. Pool described him as a man who had no conscience or feeling. When Salah Ad-Din was asked why he had not confiscated the patriarch's wealth to aid the Muslims, he replied, "I prefer to take ten dinars than to betray him." Pool commented on the situation saying, "The Muslim sultan taught the Christian cleric the meaning

of noble morals and righteousness."

Al-Qadi Ibn Shaddad related:

> Once we were walking together near the enemy lines. A Muslim soldier brought a Crusader woman weeping and beating her chest. Salah Ad-Din asked about her problem and learned that she had lost her young daughter. Upon that, he took pity and shed tears. He ordered the soldiers to search for the one who bought her and pay her price and bring her back. In less than an hour they brought the young girl and the mother ran to her. She covered her face with dust and while people were looking at her and crying. She looked to the sky but she did not know what to say. She carried her daughter and they helped her back to her camp.

Al-Qadi Ibn Shaddad also related the following story showing his pardon and chivalry:

> When the English King Richard the Lion-Hearted, the mortal enemy of Salah Ad-Din, fell ill, Salah Ad-Din asked about his health and sent fruits and ice to him. The Crusaders, who were hungry and poverty-stricken, were astonished at this noble chivalry and mercy from their enemies.

Historians agree that Salah Ad-Din did not exploit

their weakness to force them to embrace Islam. Arnold says in his book *Ad-Da'wah ila Al-Islam* that "large numbers of Crusaders embraced Islam because of merciful treatment."

If we compare the Crusaders' fanatic hatred of Islam and the Islamic chivalrous love of Christianity and Christians, we find a big difference between the two. The reason is that their attack on the Islamic world was full of fanaticism and hatred. They used to attack-without mercy, conscience or humanity-those who contradicted them in religion, and they transgressed against all people, young or old, man or woman, soldier or civilian.

The Crusader fanaticism and cruelty started in Al-Aqsa Mosque Massacre in which they killed seventy thousand women, children, and disabled Muslims. In contrast, when Salah Ad-Din recovered Jerusalem, he prevented aggression against the Crusaders, accepted their surrender and granted them safety. In addition, they left Jerusalem to Tyre under the protection of Muslim soldiers.

We have explained in details his magnanimity and forgiveness in chapter seven under the heading "Salah Ad-Din's Treatment of the Crusaders". If you want to know more, return to it to learn the wide difference

between our chivalry and their fanaticism.[1]

Criticism of Salah Ad-Din

Modern historians have criticized Salah Ad-Din's policy, his merciful treatment of the Crusaders, and his exaggerated magnanimity towards Islam's enemies. Their criticism can be summarized in the following points:

1. Salah Ad-Din should have reciprocated the treatment of the Crusaders, killing their captives as they did ours. Almighty Allah says:

﴿ وَجَزَٰٓؤُاْ سَيِّئَةٖ سَيِّئَةٞ مِّثۡلُهَاۖ ﴾ .

﴾***The recompense for an evil is an evil like thereof***﴿ . (Ash-Shura 42 : 40) .

﴿ فَمَنِ ٱعۡتَدَىٰ عَلَيۡكُمۡ فَٱعۡتَدُواْ عَلَيۡهِ بِمِثۡلِ مَا ٱعۡتَدَىٰ عَلَيۡكُمۡۚ ﴾ .

﴾***Then whoever transgresses the prohibition against you, you transgress likewise against him***﴿ . (Al-Baqarah 2:194)

2. He permitted the Crusader captives to settle in Tyre. This encouraged them to wage the Third Crusade,

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(1) To learn more about the influence of Islamic magnanimity in spreading Islam among the Crusaders, see Call to Islam by T. W. Arnold.

aided from Europe with provisions and supplies, with the result that they occupied Acre.

3. Disorders that followed the Battle of Hattin caused great confusion and losses in Muslim countries, as they hindered the advance of Islamic conquests west and east.

These are the most important criticisms that were made of Salah Ad-Din. However, other historians have defended him and justified his merciful treatment and noble magnanimity as actions that were based on Islamic principles and law. They added that as long as Islam permitted the Islamic ruler to choose between forgiveness and ransom and between killing and enslavement for captives, he could do whichever of the two was better for the public interest of Islam and Muslims. Almighty Allah says:

﴿ فَإِمَّا مَنًّۢا بَعْدُ وَإِمَّا فِدَآءً حَتَّىٰ تَضَعَ ٱلْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا ﴾ .

﴿Thereafter (is the time) either for generosity or ransom, until the war lays down its burden﴾. (Muhammad 47:4)

However, Salah Ad-Din did kill a group of nearly two hundred captives [Templars and Hospitallers] who were activists, agitators, and the roots of all evils because they sowed dissension among the Muslims and

broke covenants. They were also followed by the public, were hostile to Muslims, and injured them with their religious fanaticism.[1]

We mentioned previously that Salah Ad-Din captured the ruler of Kerak, Reginald of Chtillon, after the victory in Hattin and killed him to fulfill his oath because the latter had mistreated Muslims and dared the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

From the foregoing, we realize that Salah Ad-Din was strict when strictness was needed, and tolerant when magnanimity was needed. A poet said:

> It is disapproved to be weak in a
> situation that needs you to be strong
> Or to be strong in a situation
> that needs you to be forgiving.

As for permitting the Crusaders to settle in Tyre, he did that after he had covenanted and made a treaty with them. However, they broke the treaties and violated the covenants. He might have thought that they would appreciate his previous merciful treatment of them, remain grateful, and live with Muslims in peace and stability. But, as the Arab poet said :

(1) *Hayat Salah Ad-Din*, by Ahmad Al-Bayali, p. 162.

Man cannot get all he hopes.

The wind blows opposite to ships.

It was better for Salah Ad-Din to distribute them among the Muslim cities so as to break up their unity and to leave them under Muslim observance .

As for the criticism that Salah Ad-Din's magnanimity caused disorders, losses and troubles, we mentioned previously that his magnanimity was based upon Islamic principles, and he was right in his decisions. Did he realize the Unseen and know that the Crusaders in Europe and Tyre would wage a third war against him? If he had recognized the Unseen, he should have taken precautions and been prepared. The poet says:

The past actions passed, and the future is the Unseen.

You recognize only the time in which you are now.

Finally, he was not infallible like prophets because he was just a man. Imam Malik said, "Anyone is liable to do right or wrong, save the one who is buried in this grave (meaning Muhammad ﷺ)." The diligent has one reward in case he does wrong, and two rewards in case he does right. Therefore, Salah Ad-Din will be rewarded in either case.

Love of Poetry and Literature

Salah Ad-Din was a man who had an integrated personality. He loved jihad and he devoted most of his time to it, but he also did not forget his portion of lawful enjoyment. Ibn Shaddad reported that Salah Ad-Din was sociable, had noble morals, was joking, memorized Arab genealogy and their wars, knew their biographies and concerns, preserved their horses' pedigrees, and knew mythical and legendary stories.

Among the qualities that indicated his unique character and intelligence was his appreciation of good poetry and his repeating it in his councils. Ibn Khalikan stated in his history that Salah Ad-Din knew how to discriminate between bad poetry and good. Poets always went to him in order to recite their new poems. He also was accustomed to repeating a poet's saying:

> I dreamed of my beloved while I was
> afraid of my adversaries, and morning
> was about to dawn.
> I felt so happy that I nearly woke those
> asleep beside me, and my love was just
> about to be disclosed to others.

I woke up wishing my hopes would
come true. Unfortunately, my happiness
changed into sadness.

The author of *Wafiyat Al-A'yan* stated that he was pleased with Ibn An-Munajim's saying:

People dyed their white
hair because it became ugly.
But uglier is when the roots come out white.
When youths died, the hair blackened from
sadness.

Al-'Imad Al-Katib stated that some of Salah Ad-Din's friends wrote two verses:

You are absent from us with your
body, but you are close to my heart.
I have never seen you with my eyes,
but I saw you with my heart.

The author of Rawdatain stated that Salah Ad-Din was fond of Usama Ibn Munkiz's poetry. He memorized lots of poems and used to repeat them on occasions. He also memorized stirring poetry. Historians reported that when Salah Ad-Din was told that his brother Turan Shah had died, he was very grieved and

expressed his feeling by reciting elegiac verses. Al-'Imad said that he also used to write verses expressing his good news in his messages to friends. Among the verses is:

Before, looking at you was not enough.

Today, I am satisfied to hear about you.

Al-'Imad Al-Katib also reported that Salah Ad-Din was also fond of literature and writers. He was accustomed to meeting with poets to listen to their new works. For example, he held an audience after the conquest of Jerusalem and listened to their new poems.

We have mentioned some of these poems in chapter seven. He had a good appreciation of poetry and criticized poems delivered to him. Ahmad ibn Nafadah wrote verses to Al-'Imad inviting him to visit Damascus during its famous apricot season. He said at the beginning of it:

When he invited people to taste delicious apricots, they came from all over Damascus.

Al-'Imad reported that when he offered the verses to the sultan, the latter asked him what he had written in reply. He recited what he had said:

Let's go to taste delicious apricots

and meet at the dining table.

Apricots seemed among leaves of
trees like golden balls in silver covers.

Al-'Imad added that when he recited this verse to Salah Ad-Din, he said, "The simile between leaves and silver is not good, as leaves are green while silver is white. There is no similarity between the two." Al-'Imad modified it to:

Apricots seemed among leaves of
trees as silver covered with emerald.
The poet corrected the verse and
the simile, as the sultan was right.

Asceticism and Generosity

He abstained from worldly pleasures and adornments. His followers built a wonderful house for him in Damascus, but he did not care for it and said, "We will not live in this house forever. This house is not suitable for one who asks for death. We are here in the service of Allah the Most High." [1]

He was not conceited with supreme power, sovereignty or authority. Among his sayings was, "Money and dust are equal in my sight." He (may Allah have

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(1) *Hayat Salah Ad-Din*, by Ahmad Al-Bayali, p. 214.

mercy on him) left no money, estate or palace. We mentioned at the beginning of the chapter under the section "Piety and Worship" that Al-Qadi Baha' Ad-Din, nicknamed Ibn Shaddad, said about his faith and worship:

> As for zakah, he died without possessing even the minimum amount of property to be liable for it. As for charity to the poor and needy, he spent his wealth on them. His legacy was forty-seven dirhams and one jurm (a piece the size of a date stone) of gold. He left behind no property, neither a house, nor land, nor garden, nor orchard, nor village, nor farm, nor any type of wealth.

Have you seen or read about great leaders or ascetic rulers in history like that sultan? He is the sultan who sold worldly pleasures for the sake of the Hereafter because the pleasure of the Hereafter is better than amassing wealth.

As for generosity, he did not prevent money from the beggars or needy. Ibn Shaddad said:

> When he intended to head to Damascus, delegations gathered in his house in Jerusalem. There was not enough money in the treasury. I talked to him about that. He sold objects from the treasury and

> distributed their price to the delegations.... He was generous at all times, whether in hardship or relief. Treasurers concealed some money from him for unexpected events.... I heard him in a speech say, "It is possible to find people who regard money as dust." It seems that he intended himself.

He also was generous to scholars and Sufis (mystics) and recommended his men to be generous to them.

Once, a man who was a scholar and mystic passed through. The man departed after meeting with the sultan. Many days later, the sultan asked about him and was told that he had traveled. His face showed signs of rebuke, and he said, "How did he travel without any charity given to him?" He commanded his clerk, who knew him, to send a message asking him to return to meet the sultan. The man came and met Salah Ad-Din, who welcomed him and talked with him and received him as a guest for several days. He gave him gifts, money, a riding animal, and clothes for his family and neighbors. The man left very happy.

When Salah Ad-Din knew that wealth would come, he distributed it to the needy and the fighters before it reached him. If a fighter's horse was injured in battle, he would replace it with another. He had no specific

horse for himself; rather, he used to donate his own horses to his soldiers or promised them as gifts to people until he had given away as many as ten thousand horses. He also used to wear clothes made of linen, cotton or wool. If he found someone in need of it, he would donate it to him.[1]

The motive for this generosity was that he regarded himself as just a soldier of Islam invited to struggle against the enemies. Besides, he always believed that he was liable to die at any time, so why should money be stored while there were people in need of it? Another motive was that he did not incline to worldly pleasures or issue orders or send envoys while he sat in his palace among servants and retainers. He was unlike other kings. Rather, he was a brave fighter and intrepid champion and spent most of his time in wars. If he wanted to relax, he slept on the ground or sat under the shade of a tent. He was always happy and relaxed when Muslims were glorified, dignified, unified and strong. Was this generous champion to be blamed?

Activity and Interest in Jihad

He was always fond of jihad and concerned about it.

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(1) *Salah Ad-Din*, by Prof. Jamal Ad-Din Ar-Ramadi, p. 96.

He could not eat or sleep or be tranquil until he had liberated all the Muslim lands from tyrants, despots, and Crusaders. To elaborate on his interest in jihad and his enduring the responsibility for liberation, we touch on his observers and companions' sayings about him.

Ibn Shaddad said:

> The occupation of Jerusalem was a great matter that a mountain could not bear.... He was like a mother who is bereaved of her child. He rode from one place to another urging the people to jihad and wandered about places crying, "Oh for Islam ! " and his eyes shed tears. The more he looked at Acre and the trials that afflicted the people, the more he urged the people to jihad. At that time, he ate nothing. He drank medicine given by the doctor. I was told by some of his doctors that from Friday until Sunday he ate only an insignificant amount because he was so interested in the war.

Allah is the greatest ! This is the real interest in jihad.

Allah is the greatest ! This is the real sacrifice for the cause of Allah.

Allah is the greatest ! This is the real racing for the sake of liberation and Islam.

If Salah Ad-Din had no positions other than these, it

would suffice him. Ibn Shaddad proceeded to say:

> He was madly in love with jihad. The issue of jihad preoccupied him so much that he always talked about it in every council. He was interested only in his soldiers, means, and people who remind and advise him. He left his children, wife, and homeland. He was satisfied to live under the shade of a tent that was liable to be destroyed by the wind. Once, the wind destroyed his tent while he was outside it. However, this only increased his appetite for jihad and his perseverance.

Another proof of his continuing effort, permanent endeavors, and perfect race to make the word of Allah supreme was his conversation with Ibn Shaddad:

> "I would like to tell you something. If Allah aids me to conquer the remaining parts of this coast, I will divide the cities (to be ruled by my sons), make my will, take leave of you, and sail to follow the Crusaders in the islands so as to eliminate all the disbelievers or to die as a martyr."
>
> These words made me happy. I said to Salah Ad-Din, "You should not risk yourself and the soldiers, for soldiers are the protectors of Islam." Salah Ad-Din replied, "I ask you for a legal opinion. Which of the two deaths is the more honorable?" I replied,

> "To die in the cause of Allah." He said, "My purpose is to die for the cause of Allah."
>
> What a pure purpose it is ! What a brave and bold self it is ! May the mercy of Allah be upon him. O Allah, You know that he did his best to achieve victory for Your religion. He also fought for the sake of Your mercy. O Allah, grant him Your mercy.[1]

The foregoing are the noblest characteristics and glorious qualities with which Salah Ad-Din was endowed. Our current rulers are in even greater need of such characteristics, for with them they could promote their nations to the highest level in order to set up the Islamic State and they could also triumph over Israel and regain the honor and dignity of this *ummah*. This is not hard for Allah.

The Muslim *ummah* is in urgent need of a hero who has such qualities as had Salah Ad-Din: i.e., worship and piety, justice and mercy, bravery and patience, understanding and pardon, chivalry and magnanimity, asceticism and generosity, and activity and struggle. Whenever these qualities are fulfilled in a ruler or leader, the Muslims will achieve great triumph and

(1) *An-Nawadir As-Sultaniyah*, by Al-Qadi Ibn Shaddad, p. 18.

invincible glory and establish the future of the Islamic State.

> O Allah, our desires have become different, so we ask You to bestow us with a great ruler with whom You will be satisfied-
>
> A ruler who regains the glory of Islam and
>
> looks after it, and You will look after him.

- 12 -

Reforms Achieved by Salah Ad-Din

We mentioned in the previous chapters that Salah Ad-Din spent most of his life in destructive wars against the Crusaders. Undoubtedly, these wars hindered him from establishing comprehensive reforms and major projects. However, he did order some construction and reforms that succeeding generations admired.

In this chapter, we will cite the most important reforms and projects in order to be broader in writing about his biography and to appreciate him as he deserves. We confine these reforms to the following matters:

Construction Improvements

The most important improvement was Cairo's wall. After most of the wall had collapsed and become a passageway through which people entered and exited Cairo easily, he rebuilt the wall. He appointed At-Tawashi Baha' Ad-Din Qaraqus construction supervisor. The wall was 29.302 cubits long and surrounded the whole of Cairo, which at that time contained the cities of Al-Fustat, which had been founded by 'Amr ibn Al-'As; Al-'Askar, which had been founded by

Salih ibn ‘Ali Al-‘Abbasi; and Al-Qahirah (Cairo), which had been founded by Jawhar As-Saqilli. The wall was to protect Cairo from aggressors.

He also built Qala’at Al-Jabal (Mountain Citadel) to increase the protection of the city from enemies. Yet, he did not complete it because of his thorough engagement with wars in various parts. The citadel is regarded as one of the best-fortified antiquities of Egyptian history and has been renewed through the ages.

He also built Qala’at Sina’ (Sinai Citadel) in the Sinai Peninsula fifty-seven kilometers northeast of Suez City. In the southern part of the citadel he built two mosques and a cistern for drinking water. Upon the gate of the cistern was written: "In the Name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Ever-Merciful. Blessings and peace of Allah be upon the Prophet Muhammad. May Allah immortalize the name of the King An-Nasr Salah Ad-Din, King of Muslims and Islam, the Successor of the Commander of the Believers. This cistern was established by the King ‘Ali ibn An-Nasir Al-‘Adil Al-Muzhfar. It was built in Sha‘ban 590 A.H."

Professor Na‘um Shuqair stated in his book, *Tarikh Sina wa Al-‘Arab:*

He passed through the citadel and the two mosques and saw the large principal gate of the citadel in the northwestern side. Above that gate, there was a large square Arabic marker stone upon which was written the name of Salah Ad-Din and: "In the Name of Allah, the All-Merciful. the Ever-Merciful, All blessings and peace of Allah be upon the Prophet Muhammad. O Allah, immortalize the name of the King An-Nasir Salah Ad-Din, the Sultan of Islam and Muslims. Yusuf ibn Al-'Adil An-Nasr, Jumada Al-Awwal 583 A.H."

He was not only interested in military fortifications, but he also was interested in building in Giza and Ar-Rudah Island, setting up meters to measure the Nile river depth, and digging canals. He also constructed hospitals such as the Marstan Hospital, which was a large charitable building in Cairo. He appointed an educated man to supervise the hospital and manage the stores of medicines, and he trained him how to dispense different types of medicines to the patients. There were also beds ready to receive patients and a separate ward for women. In addition, he devoted compartments with iron bars on the windows for the insane and appointed a supervisor to answer their needs.

In Salah Ad-Din's day, Giza and Ar-Rudah were among the most important cities in the country. Ibn Jubair says in his book of journeys:

> In Giza, there was a great market held on every Sunday. There was also an island on which there were good buildings and places for entertainment, separating Giza and Cairo. Also, they were separated by a gulf in the Nile River in which there was a great mosque that held the Friday Jum'uah Prayers. Beside the mosque, there was the Nile meter by which they knew the rise and fall of the Nile water. The Nile meter had in it precious stones and marble, etc.

Salah Ad-Din regarded Egypt as the main source for his land and marine forces. Therefore, he built ships and rebuilt the fleet, and established a department for the navy managed by Al-'Adil. Alexandria and Damietta were the most important seaports in Egypt, whereas Al-Fustat and Qus were the most important Nile ports, with warships stationed in them to encounter any marine attack. The aim was to make the banner and word of Islam supreme.

Turning his attention to Alexandria, Salah Ad-Din found that the Franks were attracted to it, and he

feared for it. He thus rebuilt its walls and towers. He also built an insane asylum like the one he had built in Cairo. The author of *Subh Al-A'sha* said:

> When the sultan conquered Egypt, he took possession of the palace in which there was a hall built by Al-'Aziz ibn Al-Mu'iz in 384 A.H. He assigned the hall to be an insane asylum. In addition, he established a great building for strangers and foreigners and pledged to build bridges and canals to improve the conditions of farmers.

Educational Reform

Salah Ad-Din loved knowledge and encouraged scholars. He did not spare money or effort for the sake of reviving the cultural movement in the country. Therefore, he established many schools and brought writers, poets, scholars, and those who were firmly grounded in knowledge and arts of culture. There was the *kuttab* system established, in which boys would go to a *kuttab* at an early age in order to learn the Qur'an and traditions of the Prophet ﷺ from a *sheikh.* They also learned Arabic calligraphy and did their best to be good at it. In addition, they learned the principles of mathematics, memorized poetry and Arabic proverbs,

and learned how to offer the congregational prayer and manners of supplication.

When a boy became a young man, if he wished to complete his education, he would travel to one of the seats of knowledge in Egypt, Syria, Mosul, Baghdad, or Makkah. They went to learn the rational and traditional sciences, and manners of recitation of the Qur'an, which was one of the most important subjects studied in detail in mosques and schools. They also learned interpretation of the Qur'an from different scholars and in different ways.

Mosques played a vital role in the flourishing cultural movement in Salah Ad-Din's era, and they teemed with people praying and seeking knowledge. Most of them became skilled in different sciences, such as reading the Qur'an, interpretation of the Qur'an, syntax, morphology, metrics, and prosody.

The most famous mosques in Cairo were 'Amr ibn Al-'As, Al-Azhar, Al-Aqmar, Al-Hakim Biamrillah, and Al-Hussain. In Alexandria, Al-'Attarin Mosque played a great role in spreading Islamic culture and other sciences. All over Egypt, mosques spread and developed knowledge among the people.

Mosques in Syria played the same role. The most important was Damascus's Mosque with which Ibn Jubair was fascinated when he visited Damascus. Damascus was the center for knowledge and scholars came from everywhere. There was Dar Al-Hikmah (House of Knowledge) in Tripoli, which received large numbers of students. It made the cultural movement flourish along with Dar Al-Hikmah in Egypt.

The various schools in Egypt and Syria, as well as the schools that were established in Jerusalem after its liberation in 583 A.H., taught the four juristic schools on a large scale. Salah Ad-Din built the first school for teaching Hanafi jurisprudence, As-Siyufiyah School, and endowed it with the income of thirty-two shops and showered its teachers with money. The school remained to teach students till the end of the Crusades.

He also established As-Salihiyah School for teaching Shafi' jurisprudence, which he himself followed. Thus he took care of its affairs and commended it to be great and wide. He also endowed a bath beside it, a baking oven in front of it, and numerous shops. In addition, he endowed Jazirah Al-Fil (Elephant Island) that was in the Nile outside Cairo, as Al-Maqrizi stated in *Al-Khutat*.

Salah Ad-Din built Jerusalem School after liberating the city in 583 A.H. and appointed Al-Qadi Baha' Ad-Din Ibn Shaddad as a teacher. Large numbers of students came to Jerusalem to be taught by Ibn Shaddad, who became widely known.

He ordered the organization of study in all the schools he established, which taught various scientific and religious subjects. The teachers at these schools were divided into two groups. The first group was the well-versed and educated teachers. The second group was the repeaters who repeated the lessons given by the well-versed teachers so that they were well understood. A repeater spent much time to teach those who did not understand. He used to sit beside the well-versed teacher until he ended the lecture, then took his place and repeated the lesson again. Undoubtedly, this system resembles the system of universities and higher institutes nowadays where the lecturer completes the lecture given by the professor.

It is clear that the subjects studied in the schools agreed with Nur Ad-Din's ways, which aimed at restoring and spreading Sunni doctrine. He aimed to eradicate the roots of the Fatimid beliefs and the Bataniyah sect and to support people to fight against

the Franks who defiled and corrupted the countries.

At that time, the book market was brisk and active. In Egypt, there was a book market on the east side of 'Amr ibn Al-'As Mosque, as well as other book markets that sold precious and valued books. In Damascus also, there was a large book market that contained many varied books.

Economic Reform

The nation was wealthy in Salah Ad-Din's time because there were abundant resources and provisions in these states. These resources were collected from:

1. The Fatimid's treasures in Egypt after it came under his power.
2. Tribute (*jizyah*) that he took from non-Muslims.
3. Ransoms that he took for captives.
4. Spoils from wars.
5. Land taxes from the lands that the Muslims had conquered peacefully by treaty.

Salah Ad-Din used to spend the wealth in useful projects, such as jihad, building fortresses and citadels, building improvements, and in every useful service.

To avoid famines resulting from wars, Salah Ad-Din

looked after agriculture and means of irrigation in order to produce all kinds of delightful plants. Egypt and Syria cooperated in exchanging agricultural products and enhancing economic interests and in providing armies with their needs. In addition, they fought together against the betraying Crusaders and provided the Muslim troops with supplies and food.

He was also interested in trade, with Egypt as the connecting link between the East and West. Also, many European cities, such as Venice and Pisa in Italy, developed owing to this trade. Venetians set up a commercial market, called Al-Aik Market, in Alexandria.

He also took care of commercial markets, improved and widened them, and increased their number in Egypt and Syria. As a result, the economy flourished and production increased. The traveler Ibn Jubair passed through some of these markets in 578 A.H. and admired them. He wrote about Aleppo:

> It is very beautiful and wonderful. As for the markets, they are big and wide, orderly connected, and long. Each of the various products and industries is in its own section of the market and all the industries are present. All the markets are

roofed with wood, which shades the dwellers. Every market catches the eye and halts the hurried. Most shops are made of beautifully carved wood.

In his book *Safir Namah*, Nasir Khasru described Tripoli in Syria in Salah Ad-Din's era:

> It was a beautiful city, surrounded by farms and orchards of sugarcane, bitter oranges, bananas, and lemons. There were spinning mills of four or five or six floors. The streets and markets are so beautiful and clean that you think every market is a decorated palace. In the middle of the city there is a great, beautiful ornate mosque. Over the yard of the mosque, there is a large dome with a cistern made of marble under it. In the middle of the yard, there is a fountain made of yellow copper. In the market, there is a drinking fountain with five taps to meet people's needs. There is also a factory for paper. However, when this city was conquered, it was destroyed, its people were killed, and the library, school, and paper factory became ash.

From the foregoing, it becomes clear that Salah Ad-Din was interested in cities' construction and commercial markets. We conclude also that there was a paper factory in Tripoli, as Nasir Khasru said. This was one

of Salah Ad-Din's achievements. The Crusades were the means by which the paper industry was transmitted to Europe, where the first factory was founded in Belgium in 1189 C.E. England did not have a paper industry until the sixteenth century.

Among the important manufacturing industries in which Salah Ad-Din was interested were weapons, textiles, fabrics, brocaded silk clothing, horse saddles, and glass. In addition, pottery making and shipbuilding were strong in his era. There were other industries, as well, by which the economy flourished and production increased.

Social Reform

Social life in Salah Ad-Din's era was distinguished by seriousness, jihad and resistance against the Franks, and contention with the enemy. There were no signs of showing off, false pride, and exaggerated lavish expenditure.

He was the ideal for soldiers and subjects in that he wore ordinary clothes, ate poor food, and sat humbly. Al-'Imad Al-Asfahani described his clothes and company saying: "He only wore lawful clothes such as linen, cotton, and wool. When someone sat with him,

he did not feel that he was the sultan, for he was humble."

He was a sportsman who practiced riding and playing ball and encouraged them. He used to ride with his men after *Zhuhr* prayer to watch polo matches until *'Asr* prayer. He used to play with his retinue and some of his companions. Hunting was the favorite hobby in the sight of the people. They went out in groups and as individuals to hunt birds, fish, geese, and rabbits, using hounds and hawks in their hunting.

This fact indicates his preparations to fight bravely against the enemy. Among his great reforms in the society was the abolishment of aspects of decadence and insolence that dominated in the Fatimid era, especially during festivals and feasts such as the Nairuz feast. If we want to know the extent of this decadence in the Egyptian society, let us see what Al-Maqrizi stated in his book *Al-Khutut:*

> During the Nairuz festival, evil acts abounded. Abomination was committed openly on this day. A man known as the Nairuz Prince used to ride about and ask the nobles to pay a "tax" for the poor, and he was contented with a small gift. Dissolute men and women gathered under the Pearl Palace to be

watched by the caliph. Voices became loud, wine was drunk in the street, and people sprinkled each other with water and wine or with water mixed with filth. If a good man went out from his house on this day, he was sprinkled with water and his clothes were dirtied.

Salah Ad-Din put an end to these dissolute behaviors and obvious actions and enabled the people to live pure and clean lives and to follow the noble principles and teachings of Islam.

He also put an end to heresies and innovations in religion that took place during occasions and feasts. For example, the Day of 'Ashura' (10 Muharram) had become a day of grief and sorrow on which people used to weep and cry. Work broke down, markets stopped, people were disturbed just as if they had lost their most beloved. He eliminated these bad habits and false innovations and turned 'Ashura' from a day of sorrow and grief to a day of joy and happiness and generous spending. People made sweets and candy, put on new clothes, and ate the most delicious food on this day. Undoubtedly, Salah Ad-Din's actions were in agreement with the principles and teachings of Islam, for spending generously on the family on the day of

'Ashura' was one of the traditions of he Prophet ﷺ.[1]

Salah Ad-Din was also very generous to his subjects. He did not fear poverty, for he regarded money the same as dust. We mentioned before that his legacy was only forty-seven dirhams and a piece of gold the size of a date stone. He did not leave house, land, garden, or farm.

If he did not take wealth for himself or his family and relatives, then to whom did he distribute wealth? He distributed it to improvement projects, military equipment and ammunition, and to the poor and needy. He wanted to achieve social solidarity, strength for the state, and a high standard of living for individuals.

Among his achievements was the abolishment of most taxes that were a heavy burden on the society, such as the tax imposed on pilgrims by the prince of Makkah, who ordered pilgrims to pay a tax before entering Jeddah. Salah Ad-Din removed this tax and compensated the prince with eight thousand ardebs[2] of

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(1) At-Tabarani and Baihaqi recorded from Abu Sa'id that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever spends generously on his family upon that day (Day of 'Ashura'), Allah will provide him during the whole year."

(2) An *ardeb* is a large measure equal to 24 *sa'a*. A *sa'a* is equal to 3.5 kilograms.

wheat, stipulating that it should be distributed among the people of Makkah. He thus removed hardships from the pilgrims and helped the people of Makkah with the tax.

Salah Ad-Din had goodwill, insisted on peace in the community, the unity of Muslims, and the prohibition of injustice. This is seen in his advice to his son Al-Malik Azh-Zhahir, who was appointed as ruler over Aleppo. Ibn Shaddad reported that he advised his son thus:

> I recommend you to fear Allah because it is the key to every good thing, and to enforce Allah's orders because it is the way to salvation. Avoid entering in a war, as war does not stop. I recommend you to protect and look after the subjects' affairs, as you are Allah's guardian over them. I recommend you to keep your relation with princes and nobles in order to achieve what you want. Do not bear a grudge against anyone, as death afflicts everyone. Give all people their rights equally and justly, for if you are unjust to them, Allah does not forgive you save if they forgive you. As for Allah's rights, He will forgive you if you repent, as He is the Forgiver.

To sum up, Salah Ad-Din was interested in social reform and moral advancement so that noble characteristics and good habits would predominate in the Muslim society.

Religious Reform

We mentioned above that Salah Ad-Din was distinguished with faith, worship, fear of Allah, trust in Him, and refuge with Him. Al-Qadi Baha' Ad-Din stated: "He was faithful and truthful in belief, and mentioned Allah a lot. His belief and faith were acquired from learned sheikhs and great." Whoever was raised upon such education and truthful, straight behavior should support and enhance religious reform, correct adulteration and deviation, remove the darkness of disbelief, and call for adherence to Islam.

Based on this heedful concept and steadfast belief, he started to break the shackles of heresies and remove the rules of atheism in every Muslim country. After consulting scholars and jurists, Salah Ad-Din killed those who called for principles and rules that disagreed with Islamic Law. Al-Qadi Baha' Ad-Din said:

> He always dignified the religious rituals. He hated philosophers and those of the heretical Mu'attil sect

and deviants from Islamic Law. When he heard of any heretical deviant in his kingdom, he ordered him to be killed.

When he became vizier for the Fatimid Caliph Al-Adid, he grieved about the false beliefs and deviant sects dominating the Egyptian people. Such perverted beliefs disagreed with the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions. For example, such sects believed that the imamate (leadership) is not in the hands of the public. People have no right to choose their imam because the imamate is a pillar of the religion. A prophet had no permission to give the right to the public to participate in it. The Messenger must choose an imam for the Muslims before his death, and the imam must be infallible and sinless. The Prophet chose 'Ali ibn Abi Talib as an imam after him, but Abu Bakr and 'Umar usurped the imamate from him. Furthermore, exaggerators believed that those imams are either humans distinguished with divine characteristics or that divinity is incarnated in them. Others said the imamate ended with one who did not die; rather he remains hidden and will appear at the end of time to spread justice in the world. In the Fatimid era, a group of exaggerating Shi'ah and Isma'iliya regarded the

Fatimid Caliph Al-Hakim Biamrillah as God when, in 408 A.H., Hamzah ibn 'Ali declared that the caliph had become God. In addition, he published a book in which he stated, "Divinity was incarnated in Adam, then returned to 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, and 'Ali's soul returned to Al-'Aziz, then to his son Al-Hakim who became God in their sight through their belief in incarnation." The incarnation belief of Al-Bataniyah sects was started by Hamzah ibn 'Ali.

It goes without saying that after his appointment as vizier in Egypt, Salah Ad-Din had to struggle against those false sects and do his best to eradicate their beliefs and replace them with the Sunni sect, which is the sound belief of Islam. A few months later, he opened schools throughout the country, the most famous of which were An-Nasiriyah School and Kamiliyah School. He ordered all levels of society to join the community of schools to study the true religion, the correct Islam, and to understand the doctrine of those who followed the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions, which was uncorrupted or free of deviation.

The most important factor that helped Salah Ad-Din to change the false beliefs in the society was that the

Egyptian people loved and trusted him. They loved him when he triumphed over the Franks in Damietta and Gaza and occupied Aqabah, which was the Red Sea gate for Egyptian and non-Egyptian pilgrims. This great victory and safeguarding the way of pilgrims was one of the most important factors that prompted the Egyptian society to leave the Shi'ah sect and join the Sunni doctrine. They also joined Salah Ad-Din's side to fight against Allah's enemy and their enemy.

Egyptians who today follow the Sunni doctrine owe a debt of gratitude to Salah Ad-Din.

Final Word

This was a brief study of the life of the great hero and unforgettable man, Salah Ad-Din. The chapters dealt with his forgiveness and firmness, bravery and caution, worship and conquests, strength and magnanimity, sacrifice and jihad.

We have also shown how he was able to join the fragmented forces under his guided leadership and reunite all the countries under one Islamic state. This strong united state was able to stand up to the Franks and even all of the West. He was also able to restrict the Crusaders within the bounds of Acre and Yaffa. Many years after his death, the Islamic forces defeated the Crusaders and expelled them from all of the Muslim lands.

We mentioned also that Salah Ad-Din's kingdom expanded to include northern Iraq, Kurdistan, Greater Syria, Yemen, Egypt, and Barqah.

After this complete Islamic unity, the Muslim world rejoiced from one end to the other and was optimistic that it would be victorious. A short time later, Muslim troops under the hero Salah Ad-Din defeated the Crusaders and regained Jerusalem in the historic Battle

of Hattin, which generations have remembered.

History repeats itself today. The Muslim countries were divided into parts and cut into small states after the fall of the Ottoman Caliphate because of the conspiracies of Jews and imperialists. They differed and divided while the Jews settled in the Holy Land and occupied Jerusalem–the first *qiblah* for Muslims and third mosque in rank–and they increase daily in number and strength.

The circumstances of the Muslim world with the Jews now are the same circumstances with the Crusaders in the past: the same division, the same strife, the same hatred of Islam. But how and why did Muslims triumph over Crusaders in the past?

- They triumphed in the past because they fought in the Palestinian war in the name of Islam. Today, they fight in the name of false slogans for which Allah has sent no authority.
- They triumphed in the past because they carried out the rules and teachings of Islam. Today, they judge with rules and laws other than those of Allah, the laws of the West and East.
- They triumphed in the past because they set up a great

and united Islamic state. Today, they are divided into right and left camps.

- They triumphed in the past because they trusted in Allah's promise and depended on Him. Today, they depend on forces of aggression and injustice, such as communism and capitalism.

- It is more proper for Arab and Muslim leaders and heads of government to imitate the successful leader Salah Ad-Din and follow his ways and principles, such as his firm faith, faithful determination, surpassing bravery, costly sacrifice, right application, and true piety. They also need to study Islamic history and the life of the Prophet ﷺ in order to realize how their brave forefathers were able to triumph in the Battles of Badr, Qadisiyah, Al-Yarmuk, Hattin, and 'Ain Jallut.

  They also need to review the principles of Islamic Law and the teachings of the Qur'an in order to realize that Allah's law contains the elements of truth, good and beauty; the elements of comprehensiveness, renewal and continuity; the elements of strength, triumph and civilization; and rules of justice, equality and peace.

  Almighty Allah says:

﴿ أَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴾ .

﴿ ***Do they then seek the judgement of (the Days of) Ignorance? And who is better in judgement than Allah for a people who have firm Faith*** ﴾ . (Al-Ma'idah 5:50)

May Allah be merciful to Salah Ad-Din, for he delivered the message and fulfilled his role, made the glory of the Muslim *ummah* come true, united and strengthened the Muslims, and liberated Jerusalem from the claws of the Crusaders and hateful imperialism.

Therefore, it is not strange if Salah Ad-Din occupies such a high status in the West and East. His name is remembered by millions of people. History also relates his good life, noble morals, rare bravery, ideal chivalry, and continuing strife.

What we can do now is to pray for him as his friend Ibn Shaddad prayed: "O Allah, You know that he did his best to achieve triumph for Your religion, and fought for the sake of Your mercy, so, Allah favor him with Your mercy."

We also ask Allah to grant the Muslims a person similar to Salah Ad-Din in order to liberate Palestine and purify Al-Aqsa Mosque from the claws of the

criminal Jews and all types of unjust conspirators. And that is not difficult for Allah. On that day the believers will rejoice at the victory given by Allah, Who gives victory to whom He pleases, and He is the Ever-Mighty, the Ever-Merciful.

The poet also asked Allah saying:

O Allah, our ways have become different, so, bestow on us a ruler with whom You are pleased.

A ruler who is able to regain the glory and strength of Islam and care for his subjects, and You care for him.

Finally, all praise to Allah the Lord of the all the worlds.

Praise
By
The Distinguished Poet Professor
'Abdul-Jabbar Ar-Rahbi

To the outstanding scholar and virtuous Professor 'Abdullah Nasih 'Ulwan:

As-Salamu 'alaikum wa rahmatu Allahi wa barakatu-hu. Peace and mercy and blessings of Allah be on you.

How are you, Professor 'Ulwan? I was honored when I visited you in the company of our friend, brother, and distinguished, great, ingenious author, Professor 'Abdullah At-Tantawy (May Allah preserve him and make him a treasure for Arabs and Islam and a generous supporter for his brothers, friends, and admirers.) You were very generous when you gave me your matchless book about the Muslim king, the defender and fighter in the cause of Allah who elevated the religion and purified the Muslim lands from the filth of idols and the imperialist enemies, the just king Salah Ad-Din Al-Ayyubi.

I have read the book, learned its valuable lessons and our history, filled with heroics, truthful jihad, right-

eousness, and piety. So, I was inspired to write the following poetic verses that express my deep thanks for your valuable gift, hoping to have your approval and satisfaction.

Salah Ad-Din

'Abdullah, may Allah reward you for what you have written with your unique pen.

The book you wrote about Salah Ad-Din is a conquest, a triumph achieved by time-honored glory.

In it you have defended a great champion and the glorious Islamic history.

You have also defended other great leaders who died long ago.

Those leaders faithfully, sincerely cherished and supported the nation of the Qur'an.

They also spread among people a just religion that contained just laws

And set up an Islamic state based on sincerity, morals, and correct justice.

And they were promoted, because of their jihad, to a high degree of honor that history will long remember.

And they liberated homelands and defeated the enemies.

Damietta, Gaza, and Hattin Battles are evidence of their jihad.

They could defeat and kill European kings. 'Imad Ad-Din defeated his enemies in Golan.

Nur Ad-Din attacked them in Acre and Yaffa like a roar of thunder.

And Salah Ad-Din triumphed and liberated these cities.

He was well known for justice that will be exemplary forever.

He was a just, righteous and merciful leader of whom all ages are proud.

'Abdullah, I send congratulations adorned with flowers' scent like the beautiful bride.

It is sent truthfully, sincerely, and voluntarily.

I ask the Lord of Mercy to reward you with the best.

Finally, I hope you accept my sincere greetings.

With my best wishes,

'Abdul-Jabbar Ar-Rahbi

6 March 1975

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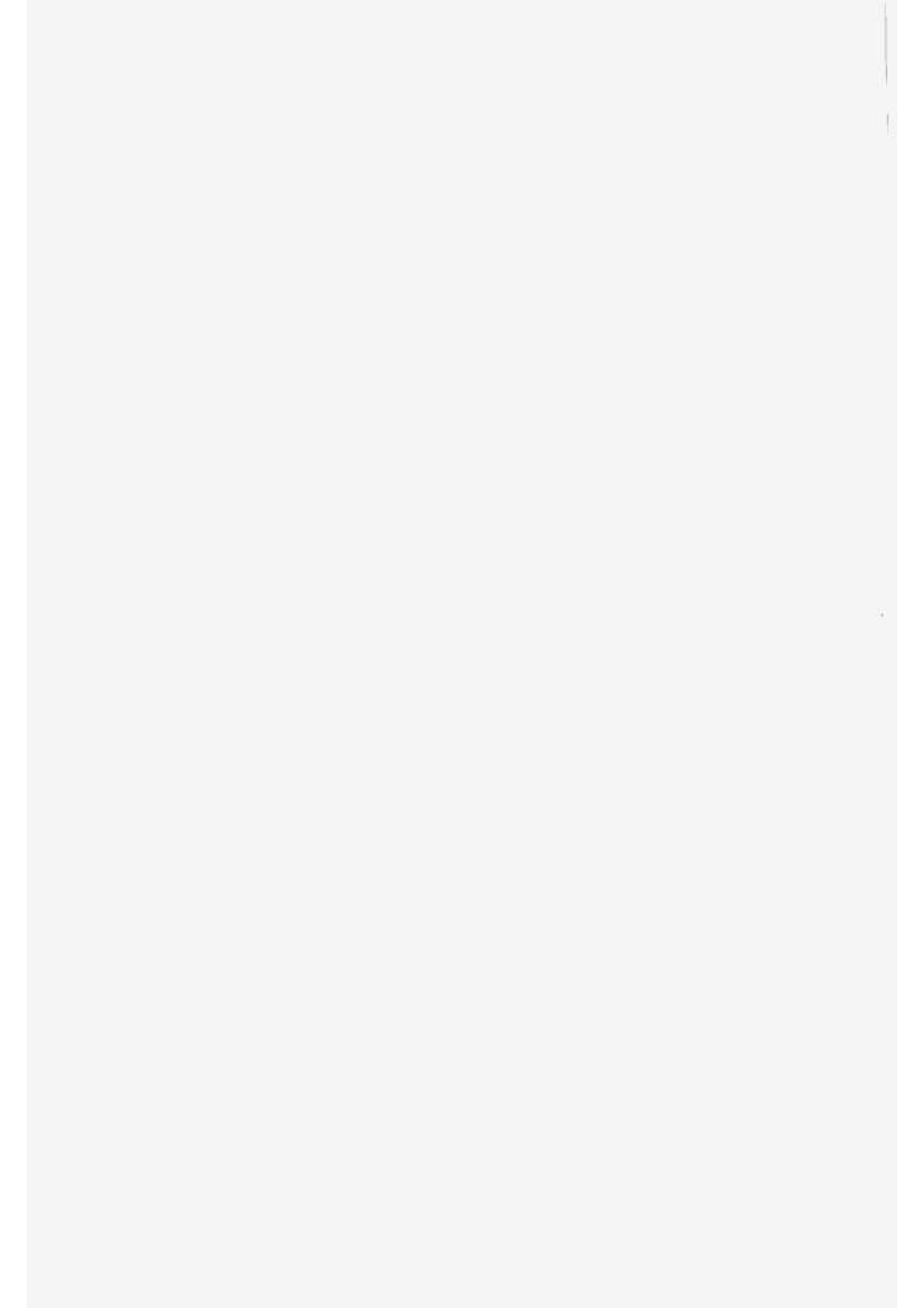
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About the book

Talking about the lives of our great figures in history, leaders in jihad, and men in the field of reformation is the best talk and the most beloved remembrance because they were the guiding lights for people. Salah Ad-Din was one of those who guided people to the right path.

One may ask why the author preferred Salah Ad-Din's biography over other figures. The answer is that Salah Ad-Din's life is connected with the manifest victory and liberation of Jerusalem from Crusaders.

When I show the present generation the secret of and reasons for victory at the Battle of Hattin, I draw the Muslim's attention to the right path in liberating Jerusalem from criminal Jews, unjust Zionism, and those who support them in the East and West.

Readers will find in book chapters how such victory was achieved by a Kurdish man, not an Arab; how he unified the Muslim ummah under his guiding leadership; how he convinced the people to follow the Islamic Shari'ah; how he fought in the name of Islam and to make Allah's word supreme; and how he treated the enemies with good manners and noble morals.

Readers will also find the noblest qualities by which he was distinguished and the most important reforms he achieved. In brief, he will find who Salah Ad-Din was.

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